

Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009



# **Mayor and Council**

## **Recommended Draft**

# **Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan**

City of Rockville  
Dept. of Community Planning and Development Services  
111 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850  
240-314-8200 • [www.rockvillemd.gov](http://www.rockvillemd.gov)

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**Mayor and Council**

Susan Hoffman, Mayor  
John Britton  
Piotr Gajewski  
Phyllis Marcuccio  
Anne M. Robbins

**Planning Commission**

Sarah Medearis, Chair 2009  
David Hill  
Steve Johnson, Chair 2007  
Kate Ostell  
Tracy Pakulniewicz-Chidiac  
John Tyner II  
Robin Wiener, Chair 2008

**Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group**

Active Members

Joseph McClane, Co-Chairperson and Editor  
John Tyner II, Editor and Former Co-Chairperson  
Pamela Slatt Fagelson, Co-Chairperson  
Paula Squire Waterman, Editor  
Martha Abrams  
Linda Bozzonetti  
Sandra Conner  
Dean Fiala  
Robert Ostlund  
Denise Fredericks Sanford  
Lora Meisner  
Judy Miller  
Lesley Straus

**City of Rockville Staff**

Ann Wallas, Planner III, Project Manager  
Jim Wasilak, Chief of Planning  
Mayra Bayonet, Planner III  
Jennifer Zirkle, former Planner I

**Department of Community Planning and Development Services**

111 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland, 20850  
240-314-8200

<http://www.rockvillemd.gov/masterplan/twinbrook/index.html>

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Purpose

The primary purpose for preparing a neighborhood plan for Twinbrook is to provide area residents and property owners with an opportunity to plan for their community's future. This plan is intended to offer a blueprint for the community for the next twenty years. The members of the Advisory Group worked very hard and for long hours to make sure that the Plan is in line with the Mayor and Council's March 2004 initiative to strengthen Rockville's neighborhoods and sense of community, and to ensure that new development in the City enhances Rockville's quality of life.

### Planning Area Description

The Twinbrook area is located in the southeastern section of the City and the neighborhoods are bounded by the CSX and Metro railroad tracks to the southwest, First Street/Norbeck Road to the northwest and the City's eastern boundary along Rock Creek Park and Twinbrook Parkway. The neighborhoods are bisected by Veirs Mill Road, which contains the primary commercial node in the area.

The City of Rockville Master Plan considers the area north of Veirs Mill Road to be Planning Area 7, Twinbrook Forest/Northeast Rockville. Planning Area 8, Twinbrook, is south of Veirs Mill Road. However, many City residents consider the "Twinbrook" neighborhood to be located both north and south of Veirs Mill Road, and for the purposes of developing a new Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan, the two Planning Areas are being considered together. Considering the two adjacent planning areas together offers an opportunity to examine the land use and zoning elements, together with other shared concerns, in a consistent and even-handed manner.

### Planning History

The Twinbrook neighborhoods south of Veirs Mill Road (Planning Area 8) were considered in the 1982 Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan. The neighborhoods north of Veirs Mill Road (Planning Area 7) have not previously been considered at the neighborhood level, but were studied as part of the City-wide Master Plan, which was adopted by the Mayor and Council in November 2002.

The Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan (Planning Area 8) of 1982 expressed the following goal as its primary vision statement: (p. 11):

"The Twinbrook Neighborhood should be a "community" characterized by high quality living space and excellence in provision of community services and facilities, public and

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private, at a scale appropriate for maintaining and enhancing the present integrity of the neighborhood.”

This statement expressed the desires of the community at the time and stood out as the primary goal for the entire document. It formed the

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basis for the supporting objectives and policies of the Neighborhood Plan in the various components of the document (transportation, housing, land use and zoning, environmental protection, community services, recreation and parks, etc.).

The 1982 Plan outlined four related objectives that provide more specifics as to the intent of the goal and how it might be achieved (p. 11):

- “Sustaining the existing residential character, (principally single family, owner-occupied detached housing), through continuation of high standards for maintaining and enhancing housing and community facilities;”
- “Denying external attempts of encroachment; (zoning changes which would impact the character of the neighborhood.)”
- “Continuing to seek direction from the neighborhood on issues affecting its future;”
- “Encouraging safe circulation for pedestrians and vehicles.”

This goal and four objectives are as relevant today as they were twenty-four years ago.

The City’s 2002 Comprehensive Master Plan confirmed the intent of the 1982 Plan for Planning Area 8 while recommending that the current residential zoning be retained for Planning Area 7. The Plan noted that there were concerns about residential maintenance and inadequate buffering between residential and other uses in both Planning Areas.

**Neighborhood Vision**

The existing Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan (Planning Area 8, approved in 1982) and the recommendations approved in the City-wide Comprehensive Master Plan (approved 2002) for Twinbrook Forest and Northeast Rockville (Planning Area 7) acted as a starting point in the identification and evaluation of the issues and conditions.

The Advisory Group used the goals and objectives from the 1982 Plan as the basis for formulating their vision for the new neighborhood plan. They also looked to the City’s fundamental vision for the entire City, as stated in the Comprehensive Master Plan of 2002:

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“Rockville will continue to be a city that emphasizes the characteristics of a small town community, offers an excellent quality of life, provides a responsive government serving its citizens, and has a distinct positive identity tied to its history.”

The Advisory Group proposed the following vision for the community:

“Twinbrook has evolved from a low-density, single-family residential suburban area, into an increasingly diverse and densely populated neighborhood. One constant has always been a community that values civic engagement and quality of life issues. The Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan seeks to preserve these strengths: by maintaining and enhancing the historic residential character of Twinbrook; by upgrading its publicly owned spaces and facilities; by intelligent planning/zoning that encourages easy access to retail and mass transit, provides for recreation while fostering community pride; and, by directing future growth towards mixed-use development on land currently zoned for commercial and industrial uses, as designated in this Plan.”

**Twinbrook Neighborhood Planning Process**

The Twinbrook neighborhood planning process proceeded as follows:

- Assemble staff Resource Team
- Outreach to Community and Community Workshops
- Advisory Group Appointment and Formation
- Advisory Group Meetings
- Drafting of Plan and Recommendations

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- Neighborhood Meetings to Review Draft plan
- Final Draft completed and Approved
- Planning Commission Public Hearing and Approval
- Mayor and Council Public Hearing, Review and Adoption

The foundation for the planning process began with two neighborhood meetings held on November 9 and 16, 2004. The meetings were well attended by both community residents and City staff. At each meeting participants were divided into groups and a Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise was conducted to help the community identify the issues facing them. Participants ranked their responses in order of importance and staff tallied the responses. In addition a survey was sent to every address within the two Planning Areas and more than 300 responses were received. The concerns expressed were similar to those brought out at the meeting. City staff was also surveyed to determine their concerns about the Twinbrook area.

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The major issues, reflected throughout the SWOT and survey process, were that residents regarded the neighborhood's proximity to Metro, shopping and services, parks and recreational facilities as strengths. They also valued their neighbors and the diversity of the area. Increasing traffic, inadequate code enforcement, crime and loitering and the possibility of adverse impacts from adjacent redevelopment were regarded as weaknesses and threats. Opportunities were seen in the ability to improve and expand their homes; increased recreational options from both the City and the commercial sector and increased transit options – particularly in services to and from the Metro.

**Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group**

The Mayor and Council appointed the 22-member Twinbrook Advisory Group on March 7, 2005. The Advisory Group consisted primarily of neighborhood residents, many of whom worked closely with their respective neighborhood associations. The Group, and City staff, sought input and participation from area business and property owners during the process.

The Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group held its first meeting on April 7, 2005, at the Twinbrook Community Center Annex, met approximately twice a month at locations within the community until the Fall of 2006, and considered a range of topics related to the future of Twinbrook, including future land use, housing, non-residential areas, transportation, public facilities and community services and the impact of adjacent development. City staff has also maintained email contact with a group of community, business and County planning stakeholders throughout the Planning process.

**Demographic and Social Indicators**

City staff compiled the following demographic profiles of the two Twinbrook Planning Areas, and the City as a whole, from data obtained by the US Census of 2000. Demographic information is an important tool for allocating City resources, and is also used to support applications for state and federal funding for future schools, parks, senior centers, libraries, housing and hospitals. It is also important for residents to understand the trends within their neighborhoods and help them formulate the future direction of needed City services within the community

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Neighborhood General Characteristics	Twinbrook: Planning Area 8	Twinbrook Forest-Northeast Rockville: Planning Area 7	Total for both Twinbrook Planning Areas:	City of Rockville
Population	5,414	5,433	10,847	47,388
Male	2,767	2,692	5,459	23,106
Female	2,647	2,741	5,388	24,282
Under 5 years	345	361	706	2,992
65 years and over	612	719	1,331	6,215
Housing	2,683	2,006	4,689	17,786
Median value (dollars)	148,500	159,717	154,109	198,700
Occupied housing units	2,624	1,964	4,588	17,247
Owner-occupied	1,580	1,477	3,057	11,669
Renter-occupied	1,044	487	1,531	5,578
Vacant housing units	59	42	101	539

US Census 2000

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<b>Social Characteristics</b>	<b>Twinbrook: Planning Area 8</b>	<b>Twinbrook Forest- Northeast Rockville Planning Area 7</b>	<b>Total for both Twinbrook Planning Areas:</b>	<b>City of Rockville</b>
Population 25 years and over	3,837	4,229	8,066	33,216
High school graduate or higher	3,126	3,633	6,759	29,601
Bachelor's Degree or higher	1,151	1,657	2,808	17,581
Population of one race	4,148	4,443	8,591	45,907
White alone	3,362	3,427	6,789	32,120
Black /African American alone	335	396	731	4,317
Hispanic or Latino*	1,190	860	2,050	5,529
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	30	31	61	160
Asian alone	402	562	964	7,030
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	5	1	6	15
Some other race alone	14	26	40	2,265
Population of two or more races	19	130	149	1,481
Speak a language other than English at home (5 years and over)	1,916	1,660	3,576	16,349

US Census 2000

\* Hispanic or Latino can be of any race

This data indicates that 22% of the residents of Planning Area 8 and 16% of Planning Area 7 identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino in the 2000 Census, making those of Hispanic or Latino origin the largest minority ethnic group in the Twinbrook neighborhoods



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Economic Characteristics	Twinbrook: Planning Area 8	Twinbrook Forest- Northeast Rockville Planning Area 7	Total for both Twinbrook Planning Areas:	City of Rockville
In labor force (16 years and over)	2,938	3,216	6,154	25,037
Median family income (dollars)	59,993	71,956	65,975	79,051
Per Capita income (dollars)	23,594	25,404	24,499	30,518
Families below poverty level	115	117	232	668
Individuals below poverty level	459	473	932	3,555
Percentage of individuals below poverty level	8.5%	8.7%	8.6%	7.5%

Census 2000

According to the U.S. Census in 2000, the two Twinbrook Planning Areas had a household population of 10,864 - 5,388 females (50%) and 5,459 (50%) males. 26% of the population were under 18 years old, and 12% were 65 years and older.

**Size of Households**

The US Census 2000 indicated that the average household size in the Twinbrook areas was 2.8 persons per household, compared with 2.6 persons per household citywide. Planning Area 8 is estimated at 2.9 persons per household and Planning Area 7 at 2.7 persons per household, indicating that there are more residents per household in Twinbrook than in both the balance of the City, and the County as a whole.

**Household Composition**

Family households made up 71% of the households in Twinbrook. This figure includes both married-couple families (56%) and other families (15%). Nonfamily households made up to 8% of all households in Twinbrook. Female single parent households comprised 11% of the population, and one-person households comprised 21% of the population.

**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****Senior Citizens Living Alone**

According to the US Census 2000 there were 272 residents (17% of the City total) of 65 years and older living alone in the three census tracts that make up the Twinbrook neighborhoods.

<b>Twinbrook Neighborhoods – Senior Citizens Living Alone</b>		
	Male Householder; living alone; 65 years and older	Female Householder; living Alone; 65 years and older
Census Tract 7011-02 (Planning Area 8)	14	119
Census Tract 7011-01 (Planning Area 7 south of Baltimore Road)	0	18
Census Tract 7009-03 (Planning 7 north of Baltimore Road including part of East Rockville)	26	95
City of Rockville	334	1,238

US Census 2000

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**Occupied Housing Units Characteristics**

The Twinbrook area has approximately 3,848 housing units, 2% of which were vacant and 98% occupied. There are very few vacant lots or lots that could be re-subdivided within the planning area. On the total occupied housing units, 67% were owner occupied and 33% renter occupied.

**Demographic Trends**

While the decennial U.S. Census provides the most accurate information about the demographic composition of a neighborhood it does not, by the very nature of its ten-year cycle, capture change over time within the ten-year time frame. There are a number of additional sources of data, but many of them are projections, and most are not available at the neighborhood scale. One exception is data collected by the Montgomery County school system, which keeps records of the numbers of pupils eligible for the English for Speakers of Other Languages

**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****Twinbrook and Meadow Hall Elementary Schools  
Free and Reduced-price Meal System Rate**  
(As compared with Montgomery County as a whole)

School Year	Twinbrook Elementary (Planning Area 8)	Meadow Hall Elementary (Planning Area 7 – minus Burgundy Estates)	Montgomery County
2000 – 2001	48.1%	28.7%	27.6%
2001 – 2002	50.1%	33.0%	27.4%
2002 – 2003	53.7%	38.3%	28.4%
2003 – 2004	55.2%	39.7%	28.9%
2004 – 2005	60.3%	37.7%	30.0%
2005 - 2006	59.3%	42.9%	31.5%
2006 - 2007	56.9%	37.4%	29.7%
2007 - 2008	55.9%	37.0%	30.5%

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, *Schools at a Glance*

These figures indicate that the level of need has increased in the Twinbrook area over the years, both at greater levels within each school, and at a faster rate than in the County as a whole.

**Twinbrook and Meadow Hall Elementary Schools  
English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Rate**  
(As compared with Montgomery County as a whole)

School Year	Twinbrook Elementary (Planning Area 8)	Meadow Hall Elementary (Planning Area 7 – minus Burgundy Estates)	Montgomery County
2000 – 2001	21.9%	11.0%	8.2%
2001 – 2002	25.2%	11.3%	10.4%
2002 – 2003	25.2%	11.7%	11.8%
2003 – 2004	20.4%	10.9%	11.0%
2004 – 2005	20.8%	12.5%	12.3%
2005 - 2006	32.0%	14.1%	14.8%
2006 - 2007	38.1%	12.9%	16.4%
2007 - 2008	43.5%	17.6%	18.8%

Source: Montgomery County Public Schools, *Schools at a Glance*

These figures indicate that the Twinbrook Elementary enrollment area has a significantly higher level of diversity than the Meadow Hall area, which has a similar level of diversity to the County as a whole.

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(ESOL) Program, as well as the Free and Reduced Meal System (FARMS) program. Eligibility for the ESOL program depends upon a child's level of English language fluency, while the eligibility threshold for FARMS changes from year to year, but is set above the Federal poverty level. The enrollment area for Twinbrook Elementary School is approximately contiguous with Planning Area 8, while the enrollment area for Meadow Hall Elementary School is contiguous with Planning Area 7, minus Burgundy Estates, which lies within the Maryvale Elementary School boundary.

**Regional Context: External Pressures on the Twinbrook Neighborhoods**

The Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan addresses issues important to its residents and seeks to define the neighborhood's role within the City of Rockville and in the surrounding area of Montgomery County. The economy of metropolitan Washington D.C. remains stronger than many other parts of the country. Many people, and the businesses that employ and serve them, want to move here to enjoy the high quality of life and opportunity that this area offers.

The population of Montgomery County, including the City of Rockville, is expected to increase by 207,000 people – approximately 18.1% - with a population of 1,145,000 anticipated by 2030. The number of households is expected to increase by 94,300 - or 21% - over the same period, with 441,300 anticipated by 2030. The County's household composition is projected to look different in the future, with more single person and childless households than in the past. MNCPPC's 2003 Census update survey showed that 53% of County households have two people or less. As household sizes decrease, more and more residents are looking for less traditional housing options such as townhouses, apartments and single family homes on smaller lots.

The population and household growth projections outlined above indicate that Montgomery County will need to add around 94,000 housing units during the next twenty-five years to accommodate its expected growth. However, very little developable land remains. The County has made a commitment to conserve large areas of rural land and to protect hundreds of thousands of acres in the Agricultural Reserve, thus limiting the amount of land available for new housing. The challenge of where to find the capacity to accommodate the projected population increase has led the County to look towards redevelopment and infill, and to redirect its planning efforts towards small area planning, especially around transportation nodes, with a greater emphasis on public participation. The County envisages the redevelopment of commercial shopping centers into vital, mixed-use

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Montgomery County (including City of Rockville)						
Summary of Intermediate Population Forecasts						
2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>873,300</b>	<b>938,000</b>	<b>990,000</b>	<b>1,035,000</b>	<b>1,075,000</b>	<b>1,112,000</b>	<b>1,145,000</b>
Summary of Intermediate Household Forecasts						
2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>324,600</b>	<b>347,000</b>	<b>370,000</b>	<b>390,000</b>	<b>407,900</b>	<b>424,800</b>	<b>441,300</b>

Source: Metropolitan Council of Governments (MWCOC) Round 7.0 Cooperative Forecasts. Fall 2007

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communities that include a range of amenities and public space. This effort is outlined in the Planning Framework Report entitled “Revitalizing Centers... Reshaping Boulevards... Creating Great Public Spaces...” Like Montgomery County, the City of Rockville is fast becoming “built out”, in that there is very little undeveloped land left, and infill development, as well as the redevelopment of underutilized sites and obsolete uses, will allow the City to meet its current and future needs.

The City has also recognized the need for the kind of small-area planning that the County is now undertaking, and community involvement is a hallmark of our planning process. This new Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan reflects the City’s commitment to include its citizens in the process of planning for the future of their own neighborhoods.

In an effort to manage its future growth, the City has made a major effort to update and revise the Zoning Ordinance. The previous Zoning Ordinance dated from 1975 and reflected standards that were appropriate for the “Greenfield” development in the new, growing suburban community that was the Rockville of thirty years ago. The City’s code has been revised to incorporate new ideas and new zoning concepts that can help to shape a city which is maturing towards full development. Such code concepts will be helpful in carrying out the recommendations of the Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan, as well as those of other area plans within the City.

The Advisory Group made a special effort to coordinate its recommendations within the overall needs of the community, and not just address each planning element separately. Each of the subject chapters in the Plan was considered in the context of all other chapters. To guide deliberations, a series of five “catalysts” – or goals - was created to act as guides when working with the traditional planning elements. These catalysts group together Plan recommendations from the various chapters and should help residents, and the City, to identify projects and programs that can help meet the objectives laid out in each catalyst. They are more fully explained in Chapter Eight – Implementation.

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- ***Catalyst 1:*** The Residential Areas: Maintain and enhance the residential character of the Twinbrook neighborhoods to ensure continued viability and sustainability.
- ***Catalyst 2:*** The Public Realm: Maintain, upgrade and acquire publicly-owned land to ensure that recreational opportunities, public accessibility and the natural environment enhance the quality of life for all residents.
- ***Catalyst 3:*** Transportation and Accessibility: Promote safe and easy multi-modal access to mass transit, retail and community facilities.
- ***Catalyst 4:*** The Commercial Areas: Promote the renewal of the Twinbrook neighborhood commercial areas.
- ***Catalyst 5:*** The Industrial Areas: Promote the renewal of the Twinbrook neighborhood industrial areas.

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## Chapter 2: Land Use

### Analysis of Issues

This chapter describes the general land use and zoning categories within the Twinbrook neighborhoods and gives a brief overview of the proposed zoning changes recommended in the Plan. More detailed information, together with recommendations for the future use of specific areas can be found in Chapter 3 on Housing and Chapter 4 on Commercial and Industrial Areas.

### Land Use Patterns

There are approximately 1,300 acres of land within the two Twinbrook Planning Areas (7 and 8), of which the vast majority is devoted to single-family housing.

Land use patterns in the Twinbrook neighborhoods were established when the area was first developed during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. The area's "residential wedge" nature was further confirmed by the City of Rockville's 1960 Master Plan and by the 1964 Montgomery County General Plan, which laid out the system of residential wedges and commercial corridors that defines the County today. Subsequent City Master Plans, including the 1982 Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan, confirmed this development pattern.

The city's location along major transportation corridors such as Route 355 (Rockville Pike/Hungerford Drive/Frederick Road), the Metro Red line, and I-270 has led to the development of Rockville as a corridor city, and it has become a major employment and retail center in the County affecting traffic patterns, business location decisions, and housing growth and appreciation.

There is very little vacant land available in Rockville, and there is little vacant land immediately adjacent to the city limits that can be annexed in and developed. Future development within the existing corporate limits of Rockville will be either the redevelopment of existing sites, such as Town Square and Twinbrook Station, or in-fill on the few remaining vacant or underdeveloped lots.

### Zoning in Rockville

The City has recently undertaken a revision of the Zoning Ordinance. The single-unit residential zones have been retained, with minor modifications, while mixed-use zones have replaced the commercial and light industrial zones.

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Protecting the integrity of single-unit residential neighborhoods has been a consistent goal of previous City and Neighborhood Plans, and this Plan aims to continue towards that goal. Although the majority of land within the Twinbrook neighborhoods is zoned for single-unit residential use, multi-unit residential is also allowed within the northern portion of the area. Some non-residential uses – such as schools - are also permitted in residential zones as a Conditional Use and are subject to a Level 3 Site Plan Review process. There is not a separate zone for “School” or “Church”.

When zoning was first put in place in the City it emphasized single-use zones, separating commercial and industrial uses from residential uses. Within each use zone different types of structures were separated – for example,

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townhouses could not be constructed within a single-unit residential zone. The Twinbrook neighborhoods were built using this type of single-use, single-structure zoning.

As the City developed, it was recognized that the separation of uses and building types made access to transit, shopping and other amenities difficult and a series of more flexible zoning categories was created as a remedy. Special Development Procedures, which emphasized a mix of different types of housing within the development, were the first of these flexible zones: an overlay zone, unique to each circumstance, was developed and was applied over the base residential zone, which remained in place. The Twinbrook Forest condominium townhouses were developed using this type of procedure. The Planned Residential Unit (PRU) overlay zone establishes the town house standards, but the area retained the R-60 residential base zone. More recently the Residential Townhouse Development (RTH) procedure was used to allow for townhouse development in suitable areas of the City, usually to act as a transitional area between commercial and high-density areas and single-unit areas. Examples in the Twinbrook neighborhoods include Ashleigh Woods, Rockcrest Courts and Cambridge Walk I and II.

Mixed-Use zones were initially implemented in the metro areas and along Rockville Pike but have now been expanded to a wider range of places where the City wants to encourage a mix of uses, increase the number of housing options, and maximize on the public investment already made in transit systems and other public infrastructure.

**Changing a Zone**

The zoning of each parcel is indicated on the City’s official zoning map. The zoning map can only be altered through a Map Amendment process. There are two ways by which this can be achieved:



**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****Sectional Map Amendment –**

Amends the zoning map for a section of the City covered by a Master Plan. The City initiates this process – often through a Neighborhood Plan such as this one - and public notice, including a public hearing, is required.

**Local Map Amendment –**

Can be initiated by a property owner who must demonstrate that there has been either a substantial change in the character of the neighborhood since the last comprehensive zoning, which was not anticipated by the master plan, or that there was a mistake in applying the original zone.

**Development Standards**

Each zone has a separate set of development standards that govern the size and bulk of buildings within the zone. The current development standards control height, lot coverage, setbacks, lot sizes, and accessory structures: they are not architectural standards or guidelines, and do not regulate the style or appearance of the buildings.

A development nonconformity can arise when some aspect of the land or buildings does not meet the current Ordinance requirements, such as a setback requirement that was put into the Ordinance after the structure was built. If the building that is a development nonconformity is demolished or damaged to more than 50% of its replacement cost, new construction must conform to today's zoning requirements.

**Residential Zoning**

As noted, the majority of the land in Planning Areas 7 and 8 is zoned for residential uses with the balance zoned for commercial and industrial uses. There are currently four residential zones within the two Planning Areas. The majority of the land in Planning Area 8 is zoned R-60 (6,000 sq ft per lot minimum) for single-unit

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homes, while Planning Area 7 features R-60 and R-90 (9,000 sq ft per lot minimum) zones. R-90 serves as a base zone for uses other than single family homes in the Twinbrook area – for example for Rockville High School – and there are no residential properties constructed to R-90 standards in the Twinbrook neighborhoods. Two multi-unit garden-style apartment communities are located in the northern portion of the planning area close to the intersection of Baltimore Road and Twinbrook Parkway.

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The Forest Apartments occupies an 11.53 acre site, while The Woods Edge apartment complex occupies a 7.43 acre site.

**Current Non-Residential Areas**

While very little of the Twinbrook area is zoned for non-residential uses, it occupies an important place in the community.

**Commercial Land Uses**

There are approximately 19.35 acres of commercial land in the Twinbrook neighborhoods. The Veirs Mill Road corridor acts as both a common area and a dividing line between the two Twinbrook communities, and contains the main commercial area serving the neighborhood. Shopping centers are located on both sides of Veirs Mill Road, near the intersection with Atlantic Avenue and there is an additional small retail site on Atlantic Avenue. The area comprises 17.41 acres, with approximately 11 acres on the northern side of Veirs Mill Road, and the balance on the southern side of the road. Under the previous Zoning Ordinance it was zoned C-2, the City's general commercial zone, which allowed, by right, for a wide range of goods and services, including a variety of retail and office uses, with a maximum height of up to six stories or 75 feet.

The Burgundy Shopping Center is a small neighborhood convenience center located at the intersection of Baltimore Road and First Street on the western boundary of the area. The 1.94-acre site was zoned C-1 Local Commercial under the previous Zoning Ordinance, which allowed small-scale, neighborhood oriented, goods and services.

**Industrial Land Uses**

The Twinbrook area has a relatively small service industrial area adjacent to the Twinbrook Metro Station. The Lewis Avenue Industrial area comprises four sites with a total land area of approximately 5.40 acres. Under the previous Zoning Ordinance it was zoned I-2 (Light Industrial) the City's light industrial zone that allowed for a general mix of industrial uses including "any light manufacturing, processing or compounding use." The Lewis Avenue businesses reflect this mix. The low-rise office buildings at 12720 and 12750 Twinbrook Parkway were zoned I-1 (Service Industrial). Service industrial uses constitute approximately 2% of the city's land base, and there are currently over two million square feet of service industrial space within Rockville. Many of the sites appear to have very little room for expansion, and the 1982 Twinbrook Plan recommended that the light industrial zone should not be permitted to expand in size or height.

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**Impacts of Adjacent Development**

The Twinbrook neighborhoods are a residential extension of the older central city and remain a commuter location, even though more jobs are now available in Rockville. Redevelopment around the Twinbrook Metro station and along the Rockville Pike corridor, together with Town Center development, will have an impact upon the neighborhood.

The Twinbrook Metro site falls within the City's Twinbrook Metro Performance Area, which forms the southern portion of the Rockville Pike Corridor Planning Area, and thus is outside the purview of this Plan. Portions of the property were formerly under Montgomery County jurisdiction, but were annexed into the City in June 2005. The site is slated for redevelopment as part of Twinbrook Station and the developer – the JBG Companies – has undertaken to build at heights of not more than forty feet high at the edge of the project in order to provide a buffer for the adjacent single-family residential neighborhood. Approval has been given for 1,595 multi-family units and approximately 545,000 square feet of retail and office space.

This Plan aims to ensure that a transitional area remains between the neighborhood and the Twinbrook Metro Performance Area and recommends that the industrial sites on Lewis Avenue and in the Twinbrook/Ardennes area remain within Twinbrook Neighborhood Planning Area 8.

The MNCPPC Twinbrook Sector Plan for the area south of the city boundary is aimed at fostering the creation of a transit-oriented, mixed-use community that will also support light industrial uses and encourage the advanced technology and biotechnology industries. The Sector Plan proposes 1,000 – 3,000 multi-family dwelling units and approximately 4.9 million square feet of commercial space for the planning area.

**Redevelopment**

This Plan recommends zoning changes for the multi-family residential areas and the existing commercial and industrial areas. The table below summarizes the approximate densities that each change might yield: more information can be found in Chapter 3 for residential properties and in Chapter 4 for the commercial and industrial areas.

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## Potential density increases: Dwelling Unit, Retail and Office Yield

Property	Previous Zone	Current Sq ft/ Dwelling Units	Proposed Zone	Potential Sq ft/ Dwelling Units (Including MPDUs)
The Woods Edge 14001 Cove Lane	R-20	162 m/f	RMD-25	DU: +/- 185 Mix of housing types
The Forest 2000 Baltimore Road	R-30	168 m/f	RMD-25	DU: +/- 288 Mix of housing types
Veirs Mill Road Commercial Area	C-2	Current (excluding Library) Retail: +/-175,000 sq ft	MXNC	Max under zone: DU: +/- 800 m/f DU: +/- 60 t/h
		Maximum under zone: (excluding Library) Mixed commercial (office/retail): +/- 1,183,000 sq ft		Retail: +/- 150,000 sq ft
				Office: +/- 77,000 sq ft
AvalonBay Companies 12720 Twinbrook Parkway	I-1	Office: 50,235 sq ft	MXB	DU: 240 m/f
Lewis Avenue Industrial Area	I-2	Light Industrial: 112,063 sq ft	I-L	DU: +/- 50 m/f
				Industrial: 80,000 sq ft
				Office: 33,000 sq ft
Burgundy Center	C-1	Retail: 16,000 sq ft	MXC	DU: +/- 15 m/f
				Retail: +/- 16,000 sq ft

## Proposed Density outside the TNP area:

- Within City limits, Twinbrook Station (formerly Twinbrook Commons) has approval for 1,595 multi-family units and approximately 545,000 square feet of retail and office space.
- The MNCPPC Twinbrook Sector Plan covers the section of Montgomery County bounded by Twinbrook Parkway, the CSX tracks and Montrose Road. It proposes 1,000 – 3,000 multi-family dwelling units and approximately 4.9 million square feet of commercial space for the planning area.
- Oxbridge Development at Rock Creek has obtained approvals for approximately 30 townhomes on Baltimore Road just outside the City limits.

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**Redevelopment – Implementation Strategies**

Commercial and industrial land within the Twinbrook neighborhoods is of relatively high value and in an attractive location, but it does not appear ripe for redevelopment in the immediate future because of recent renovations, low vacancy rates and general viability for owners and tenants.

However, the area is undergoing rapid change and it may be that in the next ten to fifteen years the owners might wish to redevelop. The City should aim to encourage change in the industrial and commercial areas, without compromising the existing businesses in the near term.

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The City does not currently have a policy to promote the redevelopment of identified sites, and some existing policies might have a dampening effect upon such proposals. This Plan therefore recommends that the City formulate a comprehensive redevelopment policy with appropriate incentives for the redevelopment of specified areas.

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## Chapter 3: Residentially Zoned Areas: Housing

### Summary of Recommendations:

- Maintain the current residential R-60 zone for the single family homes within Planning Area 8 (south of Veirs Mill Road)
- Maintain the current residential zoning for the single family homes within Planning Area 7 (north of Veirs Mill Road)
- Retain existing land use and zoning for the churches and schools throughout the area. If the sites should redevelop in the future they should be retained for single-family residential uses, as indicated on the Proposed Residential Land Use Map.
- Confirm the rezoning of the Town House communities – Ashleigh Woods, Cambridge Walk I and II and Rockcrest Court – from R-60 to RMD-10.
- Confirm the rezoning of the Twinbrook Forest Condominium on Meadow Hall Drive from PRU-1 to PD-MH.
- Confirm the rezoning of The Woods Edge community at 14001 Cove Lane from R-20 to RMD-25.
- Confirm the rezoning of The Forest community at 2000 Baltimore Road from R-30 to RMD-25.
- In order to retain the single-family home nature of the Twinbrook neighborhoods site assembly is not recommended in the R-60, RMD-10 or PD-MH zoned areas.
- Develop a Pattern Book that illustrates the existing housing types and streetscapes and makes suggestions for compatible additions, accessory uses and infill homes.
- Should individual neighborhoods choose, Neighborhood Conservation Districts could be created through Local Initiative to carry out the goals of conserving neighborhood elements that contribute to neighborhood character and identity.
- Should The Forest and Woods Edge apartment complexes redevelop, they should do so in a manner that allows for a mixture of housing types and sizes under the RMD-25 zone. Preference should be given to a proposal that combines the two

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sites, thus increasing the opportunity for open space and additional desirable features.

- Should the garden apartment complexes on Twinbrook Parkway that border the City be annexed into the City, the recommended land use would be mixed residential and, should they redevelop, they should do so in a manner that would allow for a mix of housing types and sizes. They should be placed in the RMD-25 zone.

**For the United Enterprises Property on Norbeck Road, Adjacent to the Civic Center:**

Confirm City Master Plan recommendation:

“Retain R-60 zone and note environmental constraints for the property as portions of the site are within a stream valley or buffer and also may be within a floodplain.”

However, should this site become available in the future, the City should purchase it for park land and steps should be taken to permanently protect it as parkland.

**For Twinbrook Swimming Pool:**

Confirm City Master Plan recommendation:

“Maintain the R-60 zone for single family housing on the Twinbrook Swimming Pool Corporation site if it is developed or acquire the site for additional park and green space to increase the size of the park.”

Should the City acquire the property for parkland steps should be taken to permanently protect it as parkland. Consideration should be given to retaining the swimming facilities for public use (funded by the City of Rockville or by the City in partnership with Montgomery County.)

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**For Residential Properties on Pier Drive that Lie in Both the City of Rockville and Montgomery County:**

Residential properties that straddle the City-County boundary line should be invited to annex the County portion of their sites into the City.

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**For Affordable Housing:**

- Review the City's Housing Policy to determine whether the current MPDU program is meeting current and future housing needs.

**For Residential Maintenance and Code Enforcement:**

- Increase public awareness regarding code enforcement and property maintenance by an increased outreach and multi-lingual education campaign to inform householders of the health and safety aspects of code enforcement, and the economic benefits of compliance, utilizing translators where needed in specific instances.
- Issue a Municipal Citation without a warning notice if there is a previous violation (weeds, trash, junk vehicles).
- Eliminate extensions where a property has a history of violations.
- Reduce or eliminate warnings for repeat violators for nuisance violations, such as high grass, junk cars, parking on grass, and trash.
- Maintain the current time allowed for abatement, 10 calendar days for trash/weeds and 30 calendar days for repairs.
- Work closely with the non-profit sector, e.g., Community Ministries of Rockville and Rebuilding Together (Christmas in April) to enhance property maintenance for eligible properties.
- Provide funds to hire a contractor for Court Ordered repairs (painting, siding repairs)
- Work with Neighborhood Associations to identify community volunteers to assist neighbors in maintaining their properties and to sponsor awards for high levels of maintenance.
- The City and interested groups should work together to examine different methods of offering financial assistance (e.g. tax credits, tax ceilings, reverse mortgages, etc.) to senior and/or handicapped citizens who own their own homes and plan to remain in them for more than five years.

**Analysis of Issues**

The predominant land use in the Twinbrook neighborhoods is single-family housing, and the 1982 Twinbrook Neighborhood plan was aimed at maintaining and enhancing the residential character of the area. This Plan recommends retaining that commitment and seeks to ensure continued neighborhood viability and sustainability.

The Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) exercise conducted during the two well attended community meetings held in November 2004 indicated that, while Twinbrook residents appreciated the sense of community and access to amenities that their neighborhood affords, they had concerns about community maintenance and code



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enforcement issues. Lack of adequate code enforcement and overcrowding, together with parking, were considered to be major areas of weakness and threats to the community. On the more positive side, home improvement and expansion was regarded as a major area of opportunity.

There is concern that inappropriate additions and infill development could alter the look and feel of the neighborhood. As land becomes more valuable, Twinbrook may also become the target of “teardowns”, where the existing homes are replaced with houses that approach the maximum height and bulk allowed by the Zoning Ordinance. This Plan offers the opportunity to explore ways to help the neighborhoods retain their character, while ensuring that residents are able to maintain and enhance their homes.

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**Current Status**

The Twinbrook neighborhoods have a diverse housing stock that is generally well maintained. The majority of homes were built between 1940 and 1959, for single-family residential use under the current R-60 zone. Special Development Procedures were created which allowed for alternate development patterns that were different from the underlying zone. The Residential Townhouse (RTH) overlay was developed in the 1980s and permitted single-family attached housing, such as Cambridge Walk I and II, Ashleigh Woods and Rockcrest Courts. The Planned Residential Unit (PRU) predates the RTH overlay, having been developed in the 1960s, and allowed for a mix of detached and attached, and multi-family, units. The Twinbrook Forest condominium town homes were developed using the PRU procedure. The revised Zoning Ordinance has replaced the RTH Overlay Zone with the RMD-10 zone, and this Plan confirms the RMD-10 zone for all of the existing town homes communities in the Twinbrook neighborhoods, with the exception of the Twinbrook Forest condominiums, which is confirmed as PD-MH zone.

The residential zoning also permits some institutional uses, such as the churches throughout the neighborhood, the three Montgomery County public schools, and the facilities at the former Broome and Lone Oak Schools.

The area south of Veirs Mill Road (Planning Area 8) consists of predominantly single-family homes of the Cape Cod and rambler styles that were popular in the 1940s and 1950s. The Twinbrook Forest - Northeast Rockville area, north of Veirs Mill Road (Planning Area 7) consists of single-family properties built mostly in the 1950s. Two multi-family garden-style apartment communities are located in the northern portion of the planning area close to the intersection of Baltimore Road and Twinbrook Parkway. The Forest Apartments occupies an 11.53-acre site, while The Woods Edge apartment complex occupies a 7.43 acre site. The combined properties include 330 apartments. The revised Zoning Ordinance has proposed the RMD-25 zone for these two properties and this Plan confirms that recommendation.

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A housing survey conducted by the City's preservation planning staff in summer 2005 identified seventeen houses that pre-date WWII (1898-1939, see Appendix 2). Most of these are found in the Janeta subdivision, but there is a scattering of "country" houses throughout the planning areas around which the post-war subdivisions were built. Some of these may be eligible for local or National Register designation.

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The popular perception of Twinbrook is that all of the houses are the same. There is, in fact, a variety of housing types that follow popular U.S. trends from the 1940s to the 1980s. The 3,600 or so houses fall into the following general categories (see Appendix 3 for more examples and more detailed descriptions)

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**Critical Issues**

The population of Montgomery County is projected to increase by more than 200,000 people over the next twenty-five years, and accommodating these new residents will be a challenge. As noted, the Twinbrook area has very few vacant lots, or lots that could be re-subdivided. Residents wish to retain the single-family nature of the Twinbrook neighborhoods and do not wish to see individual home sites assembled into larger parcels. Therefore, this plan recommends that site assembly should not be permitted within the R-60, RMD-10 or PD-MH zoned areas in the Twinbrook neighborhoods. This would mean that opportunities for infill development would only arise if the existing institutional uses, such as churches and schools, should cease. This plan confirms the existing land use of all churches and schools. If they are to redevelop, these sites would be suitable locations for senior housing.

Additional residential capacity may also be gained if the existing commercial and industrial areas were to redevelop into a mix of uses that included residential units, and if the existing garden apartment communities were to redevelop under the RMD-25 zone into a mix of housing types that might include single-family, townhouse and multi-family homes. These sites would yield enough units to trigger the City's Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit Ordinance (MPDU) therefore providing additional affordable housing opportunities.

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**A Maturing Neighborhood**

As of September 2005, 2560 of the 3363 houses (more than 75%) in the Twinbrook neighborhoods were more than 50 years old. Seventeen houses were built prior to 1940,

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mostly in the Janeta subdivision at First Street and Veirs Mill Road. (Please see Appendices 1 and 2, for more detailed information.)

Federal standards have set fifty years or more as the eligibility date for acceptance to the National Register of Historic Places. Sites or resources less than fifty years old may be accepted to the National Register but have to meet exceptionally high standards. The City of Rockville has formally adopted the National Register criteria and standards as its criteria for evaluating local historic districts and sites. Following its proactive policy, the City requires that Preservation staff evaluate all structures for significance before a demolition permit is approved.

However, few buildings that are even fifty years old qualify for individual designation. Following World War II, custom designed and built houses became less prevalent. Mass-produced homes - such as the majority of those in the Twinbrook neighborhoods - do not normally meet the requirements for a single site historic district, unless a person of importance lived there, or it was the site of a significant event.

Because of the neighborhood's close proximity to the Town Center, and both the Twinbrook and the Rockville Metro stations, a number of Twinbrook homes have land values higher than the improvements value, making them a target for teardowns or additions that threaten the look and feel of the neighborhood. The housing survey provided an overview of the Twinbrook housing inventory. It also identified what kinds of changes are taking place and the development pressures that are being placed on the neighborhood. Many houses are being increased in size with examples of additions and second stories going on virtually all of the housing styles. Sometimes it is difficult to tell what's been added onto an original house and what is new construction. The results can be quite dramatic and the impact is most noticeable when viewed in context with adjacent properties. When additions are not perceived as feasible for providing the extra space an owner or purchaser wants, the older homes are sometimes torn down and new, often large, houses are built in their places. These changes provide the foundation for the decisions that need to be made with regard to Twinbrook's future.

Although there have been very few teardowns so far, there have been a number of additions, the majority of which were less than 1,000 square feet. Several additions were quite large at between 2,000 and 3,000 square feet.

The City has recently recommended revisions to the R-60 zone that will limit the height of homes to 35 feet, measured at the mid-point of the front of the building from the surface of the pre-existing grade to the mid-point of a gable, hip, or mansard roof or to the roof surface of a flat roof. In the case of a gable, hip or mansard roof, the height to the peak of the roof cannot exceed 40 feet.

However, while the Zoning Ordinance regulates the height, bulk and setbacks from the street and neighboring properties, it does not regulate housing style or appearance, and

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some kind of guidance might be helpful to residents, and their architects/contractors, as they work to improve their homes. A number of cities have recently produced Pattern Books illustrating existing housing types and streetscapes, and offering illustrations of compatible additions, accessory uses and infill homes that can act as guides for enhancing the neighborhood. This Plan recommends that such a Pattern Book be developed.

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This Plan recommends that, as part of the Plan Implementation process, the community should explore mechanisms through which neighborhoods can address the external challenges affecting them.

**Neighborhood Preservation Tools**

There are a variety of tools available to preserve neighborhood character and one of these or a combination of two or more tools may be appropriate for Twinbrook, especially given the size of this neighborhood. Each tool has its own advantages and disadvantages, and it is possible that none of these tools may be appropriate or desired by the neighborhood. Ultimately, the decision may be to simply allow the neighborhood to respond to market forces. Sometimes that is the answer after exploring the alternatives.

Neighborhood stabilization tools to be considered with respect to Twinbrook are:

1. Changes to zoning development standards
2. Neighborhood conservation district
3. Historic designation

**Zoning Changes**

The majority of the land in Planning Areas 7 & 8 is zoned for R-60 residential use. . Despite the minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet in this zone (5,000 square feet for undersized lots), there are 15,000-sq. ft lots in Twinbrook that would allow substantially larger new houses than the existing inventory. Some property owners choose to demolish existing homes and rebuild to the maximum legal building envelope, which neighbors may feel is not appropriate for the neighborhood. This is a City-wide issue and, as noted previously, the City recently adopted amendments to the R-60 zone that should meet the needs of the majority of Twinbrook homeowners. These new standards should be monitored over time to ensure that they are working as intended.

**Neighborhood Conservation Districts**

Neighborhoods that believe that the zoning standards do not offer them sufficient protection may wish to consider exploring through Local Initiative (as specified in

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Section 25.14.02.C.2 of the City Zoning Ordinance) whether or not a Neighborhood Conservation District would be appropriate for them.

A Conservation District can be used to protect the elements of a neighborhood that create the distinctive character of the area. This process is separate from consideration for eligibility for Historic District status, and can be used both in neighborhoods that would be eligible for historic designation, as well as those that would not. Although it can be documented that historic districts can have positive effects on property values, Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs) may have varying implications for property values. An appropriate balance will need to be struck between limiting the scale and type of new construction and the ability of homeowners to expand their homes or construct new ones: when a NCD is approved a set of architectural guidelines and development standards would be adopted for use within the designated area.

There are approximately twenty subdivisions in Twinbrook and the diversity of housing

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styles throughout the neighborhood has led to a distinct sense of place. This sense of place can be maintained through the preservation of features that define and create the neighborhood character, and individual subdivision boundaries may be an appropriate starting point for the development of a conservation district.

Citizen participation is a key component of this process and it is essential that NCDs be community driven and have the broad support of those who live within the district's boundaries. It will be important to ensure that all residents are informed of the process and of when and where decisions are to be made.

**Historic Designation**

There are two main types of historic designation: the National Register of Historic Places, and local City of Rockville designation:

***National Register of Historic Places***

The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of buildings, sites, structures and districts that the federal government deems worthy of preservation. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places is primarily an honorary designation, as it does not place restrictions on private property, unless federal or state funds, licensing or permitting is a part of a project that will change the physical character of the property. There are no restrictions on changes made to National Register properties owned by private citizens using nonfederal or state government money or not requiring a state or federal license or permit. If a property is designated a Rockville Historic District and a National Register site, exterior changes are reviewed by the City of Rockville Historic

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District Commission, as per the City of Rockville Zoning Code. Properties listed in the National Register may be eligible for state and federal tax credits for pre-approved rehabilitation work.

Eligibility for National Register designation is dependent on the potential district's historic integrity – the area's ability to communicate its historic association through design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, feeling and association. If too many houses in the area have had significant alterations, the area may not have sufficient historic integrity to qualify for National Register listing.

***City of Rockville Designation:***

Local historic designation is probably not the best method for Twinbrook, other than possibly for some of the older houses that pre-date the post-war development. It is possible that one or more of the post-war houses that retain sufficient architectural integrity on the exterior could be designated based on architectural and design significance. But as a wide-ranging tool, local historic designation is not a realistic goal.

***Conservation*** means keeping what is already there in terms of size, scale etc., and it is for this reason, together with the possible complexity of implementing NCDs throughout the Twinbrook area, that this Plan recommends monitoring the recently recommended City-wide R-60 zone standards to ensure that it is meeting the needs of Twinbrook residents and developing a Pattern Book to help guide future home improvements.

**Affordable Housing**

There are a number of programs available to help City residents find affordable housing:

- Housing and Community Initiatives Inc (HCI) offers two programs to assist qualified Rockville homebuyers:
  - First-Time Homebuyers Education classes that teach the entire process of buying a home in Maryland, and, in association with the City of Rockville, the
  - R.E.A.C.H. program which offers qualifying first-time homebuyers assistance with down payments and/or closing costs.

Further information on both programs can be found at <http://www.hcii.org/> or by calling 301-590-2765.

- The City's Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program offers homes to qualified first time buyers. More information on the program, and the application

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process, can be found at <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/residents/MPDU/index.html> or by calling 240-314-8200.

- Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE) provides mixed-income, mixed-financing, and mixed-ownership housing within the corporate limits of Rockville. They are dedicated to enhancing opportunities for self-sufficiency and quality, safe, affordable housing for citizens of the City. More information can be found at <http://www.rockvillehe.org/> or by calling 301-424-6265.

**Property Maintenance and Code Enforcement**

Two critical issues for residents of Twinbrook are enhancing the livability of their neighborhoods and maintaining their housing values. It is important that the City maintains its infrastructure and continues funding replacement programs. The city has a Community Enhancement Program (Telephone 240-314-8334/8335) that is designed to respond to citizen complaints about code violations, to inspect rental properties and to enforce the Property Maintenance Code.

In 2008 there were 357 licensed single family and town house rental properties located in the Twinbrook neighborhoods: there were 136 licensed rental homes in Planning Area 7 and 221 in Planning Area 8. This number does not include the rental garden apartment communities. The City of Rockville requires all residential landlords to purchase a rental license and submit to an annual inspection.

The City's Department of Community Planning and Development Services Home Improvement Program offers assistance to residents wishing to make necessary improvements to their homes. Residents who meet the income guidelines may apply for low interest or deferred loans. Further information is available from the Rehabilitation Specialist at 240-314-8208.

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## Chapter 4: Commercial and Industrial Areas

### Summary of Recommendations

#### **For Re-zoning and Redevelopment:**

- The City of Rockville should formulate a comprehensive Redevelopment Policy with appropriate incentives for the redevelopment of specified areas.

#### **For the properties on Veirs Mill Road:**

- Promote the renewal of the Twinbrook neighborhood commercial areas.
- Recommended land use: mixed-use neighborhood commercial, with a mix of residential and commercial uses including retail and office.
- Recommend the provision of publicly accessible open space.
- Ground floor retail should include a full-service grocery store and a variety of shops and restaurants to serve the neighborhood.
- If the Shopping Center redevelops, then the extension of Atlantic Avenue through the Shopping Center to McAuliffe Drive should be studied to determine if the extension will improve traffic circulation in the surrounding community and if the extension can be designed to be compatible with the proposed redevelopment. In the study particular attention should be paid to traffic calming, pedestrian access and safety by utilizing the existing signalized intersection.”
- Improve pedestrian safety and accessibility in the entire Veirs Mill Road commercial area.
- Confirm the Mixed Use Neighborhood Commercial Zone (MXNC) – with a maximum height of sixty-five feet.
- The text of the MXNC zone should be amended to expand the allowable uses to ensure continued viability of the area.

#### **For the properties on Lewis Avenue:**

- The Lewis Avenue sites that are currently zoned for industrial use should remain within Planning Area 8.
- Recommended land use: Mixed Use Industrial with a mix of service and light industrial with residential and commercial uses.
- Commercial retail uses should be limited.
- No auto-related uses should be allowed.
- No adult oriented establishments should be allowed.



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- Residential units should be located on upper floors and facing on to Lewis Avenue.
- Live-work units should be encouraged.
- The mix of uses may be vertical or horizontal, depending upon site design.
- There should be no vehicular connection through Twinbrook Station from Lewis Avenue. Access should be for pedestrians, bicycles and emergency vehicles only.
- Confirm the I-L zone.

**For the properties at Twinbrook Parkway/Ardennes Avenue:**

- The properties located in the area bounded by Twinbrook Parkway, Ardennes Avenue and Halpine Road should remain within Planning Area 8.
- There should be no auto-related uses located in this area.

***Uniwest/Meljay – Twinbrook Parkway/Ardennes Avenue – former Thompson’s Dairy Site***

- Confirm the MXE zone.

***12750 Twinbrook Parkway***

- Recommend office/office laboratory use to be compatible with adjacent uses in the County and City.
- Confirm the MXB zone.
- No auto-related uses should be allowed on this site.
- Site design should be compatible with surrounding area and take advantage of its unique shape and “gateway” location.

***12710 and 12730 Twinbrook Parkway (located in Montgomery County)***

- Should these two sites annex into the City they should be rezoned MXB.
- Recommended use office/office laboratory.
- No auto-related uses should be allowed on these sites.

***12720 Twinbrook Parkway***

- Recommend the site for all multi-family residential use that will create a horizontal mix of uses in the Twinbrook Parkway/Ardennes Avenue/Halpine Road area.
- Recommend the City-owned buffer located between the site and Halpine Road be improved by the owner of 12720 Twinbrook Parkway in accordance with City of Rockville specifications. The owner should work with the City to maintain the buffer in future years.

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- Confirm the MXB zone, a transitional zone created for use in areas between Metro areas and single-family residential areas.
- No auto-related uses should be allowed on this site.

**5946 Halpine Road:**

Maintain the R-60 zone for single family housing on the site if it is developed, or acquire the site for additional park and green space, should it become available. The Mayor and Council should explore ways to eliminate the existing non-conforming use and convert it to parkland or single-family residential use.

**For the Burgundy Center on Baltimore Road:**

- Promote the physical improvement of the Burgundy Center.
- Recommended land use: mixed-use neighborhood convenience center, with limited residential and a variety of stores, professional offices and restaurants to serve the neighborhood.
- Residential units should only be located on the upper floors.
- Confirm the MXC zone.

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**For On-going Maintenance and Management of the Commercial and Industrial Areas:**

- The City should review its policies towards neighborhood commercial centers, with a view towards strengthening the relationships between the business and residential communities, and the City.
- Maintain and enhance Community Enhancement enforcement of City's commercial property maintenance regulations.
- Encourage business and property owners to work closely with the City of Rockville Police and to take proactive steps to reduce loitering, drunkenness and other undesirable behavior.
- The City should explore the possibility of establishing a City of Rockville Police sub-station in the Veirs Mill Road commercial area.
- The City should give consideration towards using vacant commercial space in the Veirs Mill Commercial area for community use, especially for teenagers and senior citizens.
- Request REDI to include Twinbrook service and retail centers as part of their mission to strengthen and broaden the economic base of Rockville.
- Encourage REDI to work with the Rockville Chamber of Commerce to broaden their membership base and to strengthen their services to retailers in Twinbrook.
- Encourage businesses in the Twinbrook area to form their own Business Association

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- Implement a City-sponsored facade improvement loan program for neighborhood businesses.
- Work with business and property owners to enhance the mix of stores and restaurants

**Commercial Areas**

There are approximately 19.35 acres of land under commercial use in the Twinbrook neighborhoods.

**Veirs Mill Road Commercial Area**

The main commercial area in the Twinbrook neighborhoods is located on both sides of Veirs

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Mill Road at the intersection of Atlantic Avenue. The 17.41 acre area was previously zoned C-2, General Commercial, and includes Safeway, Twinbrook Shopping Center, the Twinbrook branch of the Montgomery County public library system and a gas station on the north side of Veirs Mill Road. The Twinbrook Mart is located on the southern side of Veirs Mill Road and features a Post Office, the American Legion, a variety of small shops, restaurants, nightclubs, and a gas station. A convenience store and two restaurants are also on the southern side, at Atlantic Avenue.

The Veirs Mill Road commercial area serves both the surrounding neighborhoods and customers from further afield. The community has expressed concern about the future viability of the neighborhood shopping centers, their security, appearance and maintenance, and the challenges they face in acting as “good neighbors” to the residential areas around them. The City is committed to providing its residents with accessibility to services, and the ability of local residents to walk to a neighborhood center reduces vehicular trips and both neighborhood and Town Center/Rockville Pike traffic congestion. These concerns have led staff to think about how the City might facilitate improvements to aging shopping centers within the City limits and, in addition, help them to become “good neighbors” to local residents.

A City-sponsored façade improvement program is being considered. Such a program would be a good start, and would give the City a tool to offer to local businesses, but it may not address all the issues facing retail centers in the City.

A Commercial Management District has been implemented at Rockville Town Square, but there is no formal organizational structure to address issues facing the retail centers in other parts of the City. The City’s smaller retail centers perform an important service for both the City and the community at large. They provide a wide range of goods and

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services for residents and visitors, while offering an opportunity for businesses to start up at a relatively reasonable cost.

However, this area also offers the potential for accommodating a portion of the residential growth that is anticipated within the City, and the region, over the next twenty-five years. (See Chapter 1.) It could be redeveloped into an attractive neighborhood center that would provide a “gathering place” for the neighborhood while meeting citizens’ retail and service needs. Office and residential uses could complete the “mix”. This Plan therefore recommends that the previously zoned C-2 commercial properties be re-zoned to a Mixed-Use Neighborhood Center Zone (MXNC) to create the conditions for such a center. (Please see Catalyst Number 4 in Chapter 8: Implementation, for additional information.)

A common indicator of whether or not an area is ripe for redevelopment is the ratio of improvement value to land value. If the improvements (buildings) are valued at less than the underlying land, the owner may consider redevelopment in order to maximize the value of his or her investment. The Twinbrook area has a mixture of both positive and negative ratios, indicating that some, but not all, sites may be ripe for redevelopment.

**Burgundy Center**

An additional smaller commercial area, the Burgundy Center (1.94 acres), is located at the intersection of First Street and Baltimore Road. It was previously zoned C-1, Local Commercial, which allowed for a range of smaller-scale uses, such as convenience stores, restaurants and beauty shops, intended to serve residents in the immediate area. However, adjacent residents have complained for many years about the maintenance and appearance of the Center. In addition, access into and out of the Center is difficult; especially for those making left turns,

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who add to traffic delays and, at peak times gridlock, at the nearby intersection with First Street.

This Plan therefore recommends that the City explore ways to promote the physical improvement of the Burgundy Center. If the Center should redevelop it should do so as a mixed-use neighborhood convenience center, with limited residential on the upper floors, and a variety of stores, professional offices and restaurants to serve the neighborhood. The MXC zoning should be confirmed.

**Industrial Areas**

The service sector is expected to remain strong in the City because it provides essential support to residents and businesses, such as printing, graphics, storage, and automobile

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repair. There is a demand for industrially zoned space and there is a desire to preserve the existing acreage for service and industrial uses, particularly as much of the previously industrially zoned land has been rezoned to other uses throughout the County. Indeed approximately 200 acres of industrial land have recently been re-zoned as part of Montgomery County's Shady Grove Plan, which aims to encourage a mix of uses at medium to high density levels in the Shady Grove metro station area.

In the past industrial land was located adjacent to the railway to enjoy easy access to the station, or siding, and to provide a buffer between the railroad tracks and the residential area. There are similar small light or service industrial areas with similar land use patterns throughout the country. Stonestreet Avenue, just east of the Rockville Town Center and north of the Rockville Metro Station, is another similar location in the City.

These locational factors can now pose constraints. The sites are shallow and bounded by the railroad tracks to the west, and Lewis Avenue to the east, leaving no room for expansion. The sites were developed at a time when site development standards did not limit building and pavement coverage, or require parking standards, buffers, or landscaping. Some of the sites may not have adequate off-street parking. This does not present a problem for sites surrounded by similar uses, but there are residential single-family houses directly across the street from the Lewis Avenue industrial properties. If the buildings and/or properties are not maintained, the condition of these industrial sites could have an adverse affect upon the adjacent residential neighborhood.

The residential nature of the surrounding area, with frequent on-street parking, can make access into and out of the area difficult for large trucks that bring supplies and equipment to the businesses. In addition, the area is adjacent to the Twinbrook Station project, which will change the character of the area over the next few years as the current surface parking lots and vacant land are turned into a neighborhood center offering residential, retail, commercial and recreational opportunities.

But even with these constraints, industrial land in this area is valuable. Properties in the area are fully leased and appear to work to the benefit of both their owners and tenants. Industrial land on Lewis Avenue has a similar value to industrially zoned land just south of the City limits in Montgomery County.

Many in the community value the Lewis Avenue businesses and believe that the service nature of the area should be retained. However, this area offers the potential to absorb some of the population growth that is anticipated in the next twenty years. A shift towards a mix of uses is an emerging trend, and property owners and developers are starting to look towards maximizing the value of existing sites for redevelopment.

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Sites that are adjacent to Metro are proving to be especially attractive for residential development.

**Lewis Avenue Industrial Area**

The Lewis Avenue Industrial area should remain part of the City's Planning Area 8. There are four industrially zoned sites on Lewis Avenue with a total land area of approximately 5.40 acres.

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This Plan recommends that the area should remain with Planning Area 8 so that it can act as a transitional buffer between Twinbrook Station and the adjacent residential neighborhood, even if a change of uses and development standards is implemented at some point in the future.

Should the area redevelop, the recommended land use should be mixed use industrial with a mix of service and light industrial with residential and very limited commercial uses. The mix of uses may be vertical or horizontal, depending upon site design. The area has not traditionally been used by auto-related businesses and none should be allowed in the future. However, the area's proximity to Metro may make residential uses attractive, and residential units should be located on upper floors and facing onto Lewis Avenue. Live-work units should also be encouraged.

The I-L zone should be confirmed.

**5946 Halpine Road**

This 766-square foot house occupies a 0.50-acre site adjacent to the future Twinbrook Station and the Twinbrook Metro, in between the former Suburban Propane site and the Cambridge Walk Townhomes. For many years the house acted as an office for a construction business and construction equipment is stored in the rear yard. The site is zoned R-60 and is a non-conforming use. The R-60 zone should be retained for single family housing on the site if it is developed, or the site should be acquired for additional park and green space, should it become available. The Mayor and Council should explore ways to eliminate the existing non-conforming use and convert it to parkland or single-family use.

**Twinbrook Parkway Service Industrial Area**

This is a triangular area between Twinbrook Parkway (on the east), Ardennes Avenue (on the south), and Halpine Road (further to the west). It is adjacent to the planned Twinbrook Station development, contains five separate properties and has a combined land area of approximately 8.0 acres. The area abuts the City boundary and poses

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particular issues as two of the properties in the area come under the County's jurisdiction, while the remaining three lie within City limits. It is recommended that the two properties currently in the County be annexed into the City.

This Plan recommends that the area should remain within Planning Area 8 so that it can act as a transitional buffer between Twinbrook Station and the adjacent residential neighborhoods. The MXB zone would be appropriate for this area, with the provision that no auto-related uses should be allowed.

***12710 and 12730 Twinbrook Parkway (located in Montgomery County)***

These two sites, which front onto Twinbrook Parkway, are located outside the City boundary and are thus covered by the MNCPPC Twinbrook Sector Plan. The two sites together have a land area of approximately one acre and the Sector Plan recommends that they be rezoned from O-M to TMX-2 with a 1.5 FAR cap. Height and density are guided by the site size and FAR in the TMX-2 zone and – should the sites redevelop - this should allow for buildings that are compatible with those across Twinbrook Parkway (in the County) and adjacent properties within the City limits.

This Plan recommends that should these two sites annex into the City they should be rezoned MXB, with a recommended land use of office/office laboratory.”

***12720 Twinbrook Parkway***

The property, while having a Twinbrook Parkway address, has street frontage on Ardennes Avenue. The site is 4.01 acres and was previously zoned I-1 which precluded residential development. It is currently occupied by a one-story office building that is leased to the GSA/FDA through May 2009. The northwestern boundary of the site abuts a treed buffer, owned and managed by the City of Rockville, which in turn abuts Halpine Road. The southern boundary of the site abuts the Meljay-Uniwest property. Eight single-family homes are located on the opposite side of Halpine Road, seven within City limits and one, at the intersection of Pier Drive, in Montgomery County.

The property is owned by AvalonBay, an Alexandria, Virginia-based REIT that specializes in the development and management of “high-end” multi-family rental housing in urban areas adjacent to amenities and transit. AvalonBay has not formally filed a proposal with the City but are considering building a 3 and 4 story apartment building with a maximum height of 55 feet. This Plan recommends rezoning the site to MXB that would allow for all multi-family residential use and would create a horizontal mix of uses in the area.

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***Uniwest/Meljay – Twinbrook Parkway/Ardennes Avenue – former Thompson’s Dairy Site***

This 2.10 acre site lies at the intersection of Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue and was previously zoned O-1. The property was annexed into the City from Montgomery County in 2003 and Meljay-Uniwest are constructing a 150,000 square foot, 85-foot high office building. Construction began in August 2007. In order to conform to the terms of the Annexation Agreement, this Plan confirms the MXE zone to replace the existing zone.

**12750 Twinbrook Parkway**

This two-story 16,230-square foot office building was built in 1967 and sits on a 0.81-acre site at the intersection of Halpine Road and Twinbrook Parkway. The property is used primarily as office space and was previously zoned I-1.

The MXB zone should be confirmed for this site, and should it redevelop the preferred land use would be office/office laboratory use to be compatible with adjacent uses in the County and City. The site has a unique triangular shape and acts as a “gateway” to the Twinbrook Station area. Any future site design should emphasize these features as well as be compatible with the surrounding area.



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## Chapter 5: Transportation

### Summary of Recommendations

#### City/Neighborhood Traffic

- Implement improvements to Baltimore Road (as recommended in City's Capital Improvements Program) without widening the roadway.
- Support and expand school safety initiatives.
- The City of Rockville should support a soft-wheel circulator trolley that runs clockwise and counter-clockwise from: Rockville Town Center - Rockville Metro – Veirs Mill Road – Twinbrook Parkway – Twinbrook Station - Twinbrook Metro – Rockville Pike – Rockville Town Center to increase connections between the Twinbrook neighborhoods, the Rockville Town Center, Twinbrook Station and Rockville Pike.
- Study impact of commercial traffic on neighborhood streets, particularly Halpine Road and Lewis Avenue.
- To reduce the impact of cut-through traffic, study the feasibility of one-way circulation systems throughout the Twinbrook neighborhoods, especially in areas with "short blocks."
- Review the functioning of the intersection of Lewis Avenue and Edmonston Drive to determine how it can be improved, and study the feasibility of additional traffic calming measures on Edmonston Drive.
- Review pedestrian safety at the intersection of Woodburn and Baltimore Roads
- Review entrance and exit configuration at the Burgundy Shopping Center.
- Continue to install bus shelters throughout the community.
- During build-out, as each phase is completed, and after construction of Twinbrook Station, conduct regularly scheduled monitoring of traffic within the Twinbrook neighborhood to determine if additional traffic calming measures are warranted on the affected roads. Recommend and support pedestrian safety and traffic calming measures on Primary Residential Class 1 roads (Baltimore Road and Twinbrook Parkway) and Primary Residential Class 2 roads (Edmonston, Broadwood, Grandin/Nimitz Aves in Planning Area 7 and Halpine Road and Ardennes and Lewis Aves in Planning Area 8).
- There should be no vehicular connection through Twinbrook Station from Lewis Avenue. Access should be for pedestrians, bicycles and emergency vehicles only.

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**Bikeway and Pedestrian**

- Improve street lighting throughout the neighborhoods.
- Study alternatives to Veirs Mill Road for planned neighborhood and shared-use bikeways to link Town Center with Rock Creek Park. (Consider Rockcrest Park as a bikeway/pedestrian way. Upgrade path and install environmentally friendly street lighting.)
- Study the feasibility of a pedestrian crossing across the CSX/Metro tracks at Halpine Road, or other area locations, to link the neighborhood with the Rockville Pike area.
- Support and expand school safety initiatives, including installation of missing sidewalks.
- Establish dedicated pedestrian routes, with markings, throughout the neighborhood.
- Encourage bicycle sharing initiatives.

**Parking**

- Review the City's Permit Parking policy to determine its impact on residential neighborhoods, and whether it should be used to limit the number of cars each household may park on the street.
- Encourage the use of permit parking on

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primary and secondary residential streets throughout the neighborhood to minimize the threat of parking encroachments. (Limit the number of permits to 3 per household. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis.)

- Encourage incentives, such as an expansion of the City's successful apron program, to implement off-street parking in an environmentally friendly fashion.

**Alleys**

- Existing alleys should be retained.

**Montgomery County**

- Montgomery County should join the City of Rockville in support of a soft-wheel circulator trolley that runs clockwise and counter-clockwise from: Rockville Town Center - Rockville Metro – Veirs Mill Road – Twinbrook Parkway – Twinbrook Station - Twinbrook Metro – Rockville Pike – Rockville Town Center

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to increase connections between the Twinbrook neighborhoods, the Rockville Town Center, Twinbrook Station and Rockville Pike.

- Review hours of service and frequency of Ride-On bus service as Twinbrook Station develops. Encourage bus ridership.
- Examine increasing Ride-On service along Broadwood Drive.
- Examine whether bus stops should be aligned with crosswalks to improve safety on Twinbrook Parkway.
- Review phasing of traffic signals on Veirs Mill Road, and at the intersection of Twinbrook Parkway and Veirs Mill Road.
- Support construction of Montrose Parkway East.

**State of Maryland**

- Improve pedestrian safety and accessibility in the Veirs Mill Road commercial area.
- Install a count down pedestrian light at Veirs Mill Road and Atlantic Ave.
- Study sight distances and implement signage and street markings on access roads into and out of neighborhoods from Veirs Mill Road via service roads.
- City and State should work to improve the physical appearance of the Veirs Mill Road commercial area, between Midway Avenue and Twinbrook Parkway, by installing additional trees and landscaping elements.
- Support interchange improvements at Gude Drive/MD 355 and the construction of a Gude Drive/I-270 interchange. Support redesignation of Gude Drive as MD 28 to divert traffic away from First Street/Veirs Mill Road, the Town Center and West Montgomery Avenue.
- Support improvement of intersection of Veirs Mill Road and First Street (MD28/MD 586 interchange) only as part of a corridor-based initiative that considers the impact on adjacent intersections. Any road improvements should ensure that pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is enhanced.
- Any transit improvement on Veirs Mill Road should be made within the existing right of way and should not increase neighborhood cut-through traffic. A soft-wheel circulator trolley linking Twinbrook to the Town Center, Twinbrook Station and Rockville Pike would be the preferred option.
- Support an enhanced transit stop at Veirs Mill Road and Twinbrook Parkway, particular attention should be given to streetscape improvements and safe pedestrian and bicycle connections that can link both sides of the neighborhood.
- Study feasibility of reducing speed limit on Norbeck Road.

**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****Noise**

- Establish design standards within the Rockville Pike and Twinbrook Metro Performance Zone Plans to mitigate reflective noise from buildings abutting railroad tracks.
- Monitor Montgomery County effort to implement a railroad “Quiet Zone” in Kensington to determine whether similar action should be recommended for Randolph Road.
- Recommend slower train speeds through residential areas.

**Analysis of Issues**

The Twinbrook neighborhoods are bounded by arterial roads carrying a large volume of both local and non-local commuter traffic. Rockville Pike, Norbeck Road, and Twinbrook Parkway carry the largest percent of this traffic and form a boundary around the two neighborhoods. Veirs Mill Road bisects the area, and is an important cross-county link between Silver Spring, Wheaton and the City of Rockville. The neighborhood’s internal circulation system is largely dictated by the land use pattern, and is designed to direct traffic on to a limited number

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of collector routes. Traffic backups occur at the limited number of entrance and exit points. Major improvements, such as intersection improvements at First Street and Veirs Mill Road and the Veirs Mill Road Bus Rapid Transit Plan (BRT) being considered by the State of Maryland also bring challenges to the neighborhood, and should provide additional impetus for commercial and streetscape improvements in the corridor.

Several large developments will be completed over the next few years and it will be important to continuously monitor the traffic situation to limit any negative impacts that these developments may have on the Twinbrook neighborhoods. Twinbrook Station is expected to build-out to 1,595 multi-family units and approximately 545,000 square feet of retail and office space and redevelopment in Montgomery County, south of Twinbrook Parkway is anticipated to yield between 1,000 – 3,000 multi-family units and approximately 4.9 million square feet of commercial space. In addition, continuing redevelopment in Rockville Town Center and along the Rockville Pike corridor is anticipated over the coming years.

At two neighborhood meetings held in November 2004 to launch the Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan, several aspects of traffic and transportation emerged as major concerns for the community. Residents are concerned about both the volume and speed of traffic on the major roads and through the community, with vehicles cutting through the neighborhood being a primary concern.

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The following issues were identified and have been confirmed as problem areas through subsequent staff work and discussions in the Advisory Group:

- Cut-through traffic, particular north-south cut-throughs.
- Pedestrian safety in general, and particularly at Veirs Mill Road and Twinbrook Shopping Center.
- Speeding on major roads and throughout the neighborhoods.
- Traffic congestion, particularly on Twinbrook Parkway and at the intersection of Lewis Avenue and Edmonston Drive.
- Roadway improvements needed on Baltimore Road.
- Parking in the Metro area and throughout the neighborhood.

**Existing Conditions**

Every road in the City of Rockville is assigned a classification that determines the physical features of the road as well as how it is used. The City has developed a set of specific criteria to determine where and whether improvements should be made. The Department of Public Works, or their consultants, conducts a systematic analysis of each area by measuring the existing speeds and counting the number of vehicles passing through the area, and if the particular thresholds are reached, improvements will be considered for the area. (Please see Appendix for additional information on eligibility criteria).

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**Twinbrook Station Improvements**

As part of its Use Permit agreement with the City of Rockville, the developer of Twinbrook Station, the JBG Companies, has undertaken to provide a series of improvements and traffic calming mitigations throughout the Twinbrook neighborhoods. Certain improvements are tied to each phase of the development and they will be implemented as building progresses. City DPW staff is working with JBG and their consultants to determine the most appropriate locations for the improvements, using the City's established criteria (see above) and listening to community concerns.

**Vehicular Circulation**

The Twinbrook neighborhoods are bounded by: First Street/Norbeck Road to the northeast, the City's eastern boundary along Rock Creek Park and Twinbrook Parkway, and the CSX and Metro railroad tracks to the southwest. The neighborhoods are bisected by Veirs Mill Road, which contains the primary commercial node in the area.

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The CSX and Metro tracks act as both a boundary and a barrier, and access from the neighborhood onto Rockville Pike is limited to one exit at Edmonston Drive. The intersection of Edmonston Drive and Lewis Avenue is particularly congested at peak times, in part because Edmonston Drive is also used as a cut-through route from Veirs Mill Road to Rockville Pike. The City should review the functioning of the intersection of Lewis Avenue and Edmonston Drive to determine how it can be improved, and study the feasibility of additional traffic calming measures on Edmonston Drive.

Residents throughout the Twinbrook neighborhoods have expressed interest in one-way circulation systems to reduce traffic congestion from cut-through traffic, and the City should study the feasibility of one-way circulation systems throughout the Twinbrook neighborhoods, especially in areas with “short blocks” that would not cause residents to make extensive detours.

**Veirs Mill Road**

Veirs Mill Road (State Route 586) serves as one of the major east-west arterial roads in Montgomery County as it is the primary surface road connecting Silver Spring and Wheaton with Rockville. The Twinbrook neighborhoods primary commercial area lies on either side of Veirs Mill Road, at its intersection with Twinbrook Parkway. The road therefore has the dual function of carrying commuters passing through the area, as well as residents going about their daily business.

The State of Maryland is recommending improvements to the intersection of Veirs Mill Road and First Street. (Project number GS-16 Norbeck Road (MD28 “First Street”)/Veirs Mill Road (MD 586).) This project has been under consideration for some time and the City’s Master Plan of 2002 supported a grade separation alternative. The City has amended its position and has recommended that the intersection should only be improved if it is part of a corridor-based initiative that considers the impact upon all of the adjacent intersections. The City also supports interchange improvements at Gude Drive/MD 355 and the construction of a Gude Drive/I-270 interchange. Once these improvements have been completed, the City will support the redesignation of Gude Drive as MD 28 - so that traffic is diverted away from First Street/Veirs Mill Road, the Town Center and West Montgomery Avenue.

Veirs Mill Road will be expanded to three lanes in each direction from Twinbrook Parkway to Randolph Road, west of the City boundary. (Project number WI-19 Veirs Mill Road (MD 586)).

The community has expressed concern about traffic congestion on Veirs Mill Road during peak hours. Conversely, there are concerns about speeding traffic at other times. Members of the Advisory Group expressed concern about the physical appearance of Veirs Mill Road, particularly in the commercial areas. There are very few trees and the landscaping is unattractive and uninviting.

**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****Veirs Mill Road Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)**

A Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system has been proposed for Veirs Mill Road to link Rockville Metro Station with the Wheaton Metro Station. (Project number TR-13 Veirs Mill Road (MD 586) BRT – Wheaton to Rockville.) The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is determining whether a rapid bus system should be implemented between these two important centers in order to increase cross-county transportation options. The Montgomery County Department of Public Works Transportation

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Division completed Phase 1 of the Veirs Mill Road Bus Rapid Transit Facility Planning in August 2005. The project report, which was prepared by the consulting firms of McCormick Taylor and Gannett Fleming, evaluates the potential for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service on Veirs Mill Road between the Rockville and Wheaton Metro Stations. It follows on from the 2003 Veirs Mill Road BRT Study Final Report and narrows the list of alternative routes down to two:

**Alternative 1:**

Alternative 1, the “Service Road Alternative,” uses the service roads where they exist, with the BRT service moving into the right-most lane of the general purpose lanes where they do not. This alternative would have a significant impact on the Twinbrook neighborhoods either side of Veirs Mill Road within the City, as the access breaks in the median between the roadway and the service road would be closed. Access would be gained by routing through the neighborhoods, increasing the level of internal neighborhood traffic. Total Roadway costs for Alternative 1 are estimated at \$25.3 million.

**Alternative 2:**

Alternative 2 is the “Additional Lane Alternative” which assumes a third lane would be added where one does not currently exist. It could result in less impact on the Twinbrook neighborhoods. Total Roadway costs for Alternative 2 are estimated at \$39.8 million, so it is considerably more expensive than Alternative 1.

A third alternative that placed the BRT in the median of Veirs Mill Road was not put forward, but the report noted that the feasibility of such a system should be reviewed. The City’s Traffic and Transportation Division was part of the working group and argued strongly against the inclusion of Alternative 1, which the City would be unlikely to support. The project team felt, however, that more than one alternative would need to be submitted for study and so it was put forward.

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The Montgomery County Planning Board and the County Council's Transportation and Environment (T&E) Committee were briefed on the project in Fall 2005. The County recommended the project be included in the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Consolidated Transportation Program. (CTP). MDOT is considering long-term improvements identified in the Veirs Mill Road BRT report, and may use WMATA Metro Matters funds for short-term improvements.

WMATA has undertaken the Metrobus: Q2/Veirs Mill Road Study to improve service on the Q2 Metrobus line, which serves Veirs Mill Road and has one of the highest levels of ridership in the Metro system. The Montgomery County Department of Transportation anticipates resuming study of BRT on Veirs Mill Road in 2010, with a study of a Georgia Avenue BRT beginning in 2011.

This Plan recommends that any transit improvements – in either the short or the long term – should be made within the existing right of way and should not increase neighborhood cut-through traffic.

In the shorter term timeframe this Plan supports a soft-wheel circulator trolley that runs clockwise and anti-clockwise from: Rockville Town Center - Rockville Metro – Veirs Mill Road – Twinbrook Parkway – Twinbrook Station - Twinbrook Metro – Rockville Pike – Rockville Town Center to increase connections between the Twinbrook neighborhoods and these major centers. However, should the State decide, over the longer term, to proceed with an enhanced transit system on Veirs Mill Road, with a station in the commercial area, the area should be considered as a transit hub. Particular attention should be given to extensive streetscape improvements and to safe pedestrian and bicycle connections that can link both sides of the neighborhood.”

The BRT Proposal has not been considered by the City Planning Commission or the Mayor and Council.

**Baltimore Road**

Baltimore Road is a Primary Residential Class 1 road that runs from South Stonestreet, near the Rockville Metro, crosses Route 28 and runs west to northeast, intersecting with Twinbrook Parkway, before crossing the City boundary at Rock Creek, and rejoining Route 28 to the northeast of the City.

Baltimore Road connects Rockville Town Center and Rockville Metro/MARC to the northern part of the City and carries visitors to the Civic Center, the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater, Croyden Creek Nature Center and Rockville High School. It also acts as a cut through route for county residents driving to Twinbrook Metro. The City has recently installed a speed camera near the intersection of Baltimore Road and Twinbrook Parkway, in front of Rockville High School, to deter motorists from speeding.



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In 1996 the City proposed a series of roadway enhancements for Baltimore Road that include upgrading the roadway and

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implementing drainage and storm water management improvements. (City CIP number 420-850-6F11). Members of the community collaborated with the City and concept designs were completed in 2001, but due to financial constraints, the project was not funded. However, funding has recently become available to the City through the Federal Government's "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users" (SAFETEA-LU) and money that had been included in that Bill to facilitate pedestrian and vehicular access to the Rockville Town Center will be diverted to the Baltimore Road improvements. City and State Transportation Planning staffs started the project process in 2006 and design is scheduled for summer 2009, with construction to begin in 2010.

**Twinbrook Parkway**

Twinbrook Parkway begins at its intersection with Baltimore Road in the northeastern portion of both the Planning Area and the City itself. This northern portion of Twinbrook Parkway lies fully within the City and it is classified as a Primary Residential Class 1 road that runs south, and east, where it intersects with Veirs Mill Road, before running south to its intersection with Rockville Pike (Rt. 355). South of Veirs Mill Road, Twinbrook Parkway is classified as an Arterial road and portions of it lie within Montgomery County.

The City has recently improved the street crossings in the Meadow Hall Elementary School area and has also placed mobile speed cameras near the school. However, residents are concerned that a number of the crosswalks are not well aligned with bus stops and that riders tend to cross the street at the bus stop, rather than walk to the nearest crosswalk. The City and County should examine whether realignment of bus stops with crosswalks is appropriate.

Twinbrook Parkway acts as a major north-south connector route in the mid-County area, carries traffic to and from the Twinbrook Metro Station, and is subject to periods of congestion throughout its length.

**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****Pedestrian Network and Bikeways**

The City of Rockville is committed to providing multi-modal access to amenities, and to this end, the Department of Public Works has developed a comprehensive program for planning pedestrian and bikeway improvements throughout the City. DPW conducts public meetings and does public outreach in an effort to reach community consensus on the installation of sidewalks and bicycle paths. The program has four main phases:

1. A public meeting to announce that the improvements are being considered.
2. Concept design notification and comment period.
3. Final design notification and comment period, and
4. Construction notice.

The City has recently increased safety measures in the immediate vicinity of Meadow Hall and Twinbrook Elementary Schools. Signs, crosswalks and panels have been installed and the pavements marked. However, there are still portions of the Twinbrook areas without sidewalks, even in areas adjacent to the elementary schools, and it is important that the community consider the public safety aspects of installing sidewalks, as well as individual aesthetic concerns.

A number of sidewalk improvements will be provided as part of the Twinbrook Station mitigation agreement, as well as through the City's own CIP.

Because of the large amount of missing sidewalks in the City and the costs associated with constructing sidewalks, the City has created a Sidewalk Prioritization Policy. The Rockville Sidewalk Prioritization Policy helps determine in what order the City should construct sidewalks, which is a helpful tool for including sidewalks in the Citywide Capital Improvements Program. Sidewalks are grouped into one of five groups, A through E, with A being the highest range of scores and E being the lowest range of scores. In addition to the missing link's total score, information about available City right-of-way, public support for the construction of the sidewalk, and the potential environmental impacts of constructing the sidewalk will be taken into consideration when determining the timeline for planning, design, and construction of the sidewalk.

The City's Bikeway Master Plan of 2004

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recommended that Veirs Mill Road should be used for a neighborhood and shared use path to link Town Center with Rock Creek Park. The Plan recommends that this decision be reconsidered, especially in light of pending State initiatives at the First Street/Veirs Mill interchange and the Veirs Mill Road BRT.

**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****Mass Transit**

Ten separate bus routes serve the Twinbrook neighborhoods. WMATA-operated buses run on the major roads and the Montgomery County Ride-On runs on both major roads and through the neighborhoods. The majority of the routes connect with the City's two Metro stations and residents would like the service extended into the evening hours. However, Montgomery County will not consider expanding service unless the ridership numbers warrant it, and this Plan recommends that the Ride-On routes and service levels be reviewed as Twinbrook Station comes on line and the population and amenities in the area increases. The County should also examine whether increasing Ride-On services along Broadwood Drive would be appropriate, now that the signalized intersection at Veirs Mill Road has made safe crossing possible.

As mentioned previously, WMATA is conducting the Metrobus Q2 Veirs Mill Road Line Study, to determine ways to improve transit in the corridor.

The City's DPW considers that there are an adequate number of bus stops provided throughout out the neighborhood to handle the present ridership. However, there is still need for additional shelters to be installed throughout the community (see map) and these should be installed using either developer, or City, funds.

Residents and commuters have expressed concern about poor street lighting levels near the Metro station. The Twinbrook Station development project will provide improved lighting in the Metro area as well as on the streets and walkways that will connect back into the neighborhood.

**Parking**

With redevelopment at Twinbrook Metro (Twinbrook Station project), parking in the area will be adequate in terms of City parking requirements and standards. There are existing permit parking areas in residential areas close to the Twinbrook Metro station and these should be monitored over time to ensure that they remain effective. Additional portions of the neighborhood may chose to move to permit parking on their streets, should parking by outside visitors become an issue in the future.

Residents have complained about the number of cars parked on the neighborhood streets and this is a continuing challenge in an area that was constructed without garages, or in many cases, any off-street parking. While the parked cars do act as an informal traffic calming measure, and may serve to slow traffic speeds, as the numbers of cars per household increases, the problem becomes more acute. The City should consider developing incentives for residents to build driveways in an environmentally friendly way, using pervious paving materials and adjacent rain gardens to absorb any run-off.

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The City can assist property owners in constructing a driveway apron and should consider expanding the successful Driveway Apron Program by encouraging more property owners to participate in it. Property owners can either pay for the apron in full, or have it billed to their property tax bill as a special assessment that can be repaid over a five-year period. More information can be found by calling 240-314-8500, or online in both English and Spanish, at:

[http://www.rockvillemd.gov/e-gov/pw/Driveway\\_Apron\\_Constr\\_English.pdf](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/e-gov/pw/Driveway_Apron_Constr_English.pdf)

[http://www.rockvillemd.gov/e-gov/pw/Driveway\\_Apron\\_Constr\\_Spanish.pdf](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/e-gov/pw/Driveway_Apron_Constr_Spanish.pdf)

**Noise****Highway Noise**

The City of Rockville is covered by the Montgomery County Noise Policy. More information can be found by calling 240-777-7770 and asking to speak with an Environmental Protection Specialist, or on-line at:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/deptmpl.asp?url=/content/dep/Noise/home.asp>

A study of transportation noise was conducted for the City in 2005, and the final report can be found at: <http://www.ci.rockville.md.us/mayor-council/2006/18-06/18-06-item9C-study.pdf> or by calling 240-314-8500.

**Railroad Noise**

While there is little that can be done to reduce the levels of noise that the actual train makes, the U.S. Department of Transportation implemented the “Train Horn” final rule on June 24, 2005, that enables communities to establish “Quiet Zones” where trains will not sound their horns when approaching at-grade crossings providing certain safety conditions are in place. Southbound trains sound their horns when passing through Twinbrook, in the City of Rockville and when approaching the at-grade crossing at Randolph Road in Mont-

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gomery County. This means that safety improvements would need to be made in the County in order for City neighborhoods to benefit. Montgomery County has received a “Quiet Zone” request from Kensington and has decided to treat it as a pilot program to determine the feasibility of further applications. They have retained the services of BMI-SG, a consulting company with nation-wide experience, to determine what improvements might be needed in order to apply for the zone to be established. A lengthy and complicated application process involving County, State and Federal agencies, will follow if the County decides to pursue designation. The proposed Montrose Parkway East

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should eliminate the at-grade crossing at Randolph and may well be underway before all of the necessary applications are completed for the Quiet Zone.

**Alleys**

The majority of the homes in the Twinbrook planning areas were constructed during the “developer era” of the 1940s, 50s and 60s, when alleys were not considered a desirable neighborhood feature. However, three alleys remain in the Janeta area, which was largely built pre-developer, and this Plan recommends that these alleys should remain intact, as they provide useful access for residents and help with neighborhood traffic circulation.

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## Chapter 6: The Environment

### Summary of Recommendations

- Review the Rock Creek Watershed Study to ensure that stormwater management, flood control and stream restoration are adequate and safe.
- Encourage Homeowner Associations, Citizen Associations and property owner participation with the City of Rockville's Stormwater Quality educational and outreach opportunities.
- Encourage Neighborhood Associations to work with City of Rockville staff to educate property owners on the importance of stream buffers, and on the legal responsibility to properly maintain these buffers as written into the Water Quality Protection Ordinance
- Report locations of drainage problems to the Department of Public Works to help to determine patterns and facilitate future mitigation.
- Explore the possibility of conservation easements for suitable properties.
- Recommend prompt removal of diseased trees, even if they cannot be replaced immediately.
- Support retention and expansion of the urban tree canopy through full funding for tree removal and replacement.
- Encourage citizen participation in the reforestation effort.
- Continue to develop and implement protection mechanisms for City-owned parkland and environmentally sensitive areas.
- The City of Rockville and private property owners should use environmentally friendly dark sky shielded lighting systems when replacing street and park lights.
- Support the adoption of Montgomery County's business and commercial recycling program within the City.

### Analysis of Issues

This chapter provides an overview of the existing environmental settings and natural resources for the Twinbrook community and recommends sustainable practices for the neighborhood so that parks, open space, streams and tree canopy will exist for future generations.

At community meetings held in November 2004, Twinbrook residents indicated that they value their environment, appreciate the number of trees within the neighborhood and enjoy their access to recreational facilities and green space.

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Several areas of concern were raised during the community meetings, were identified by staff and the Advisory Group, or have emerged in subsequent discussions. These issues include:

- Flooding and stormwater management
- Tree maintenance

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**Current Conditions**

Twinbrook is bordered to the north by the John G. Hayes Forest Preserve, to the east by Rock Creek Park and to the west by the CSX and metro rail lines. The neighborhood is largely within the Rock Creek watershed, containing several tributaries but no portion of the main stem. Twinbrook is also partially within the headwaters of the Cabin John Creek watershed.

The Twinbrook neighborhood is comprised primarily of single-family residential development with some townhomes and apartments as well as limited commercial areas. The neighborhood is fully developed and changes in the future will come from infill, homeowner improvements and redevelopment possibilities. Twinbrook was developed in the 1940s and 1950s before modern stormwater conveyance and retention requirements were in place.

Environmental resources in Twinbrook include parks and open space, urban tree canopy and open channel streams at Rockcrest Park, Calvin Park and Civic Center Park. Environmental concerns in the neighborhood include stormwater management/drainage, stream restoration, urban runoff quality (pollution prevention and water quality protection), maintaining and improving tree canopy and keeping a sustainable, livable community.

**Utilities****Water**

The City of Rockville Department of Public Works hired a consultant to conduct a citywide water distribution master plan (WDMP). The WDMP was completed in 2008 and included a significant amount of field-testing and calibration of a computer model, which integrated all of Rockville's water pipes (180 miles of transmission and grid mains). One of the study's main tasks involved analyzing fire flows. The results of the field-testing and computer model simulations found that Rockville has fire hydrants that cannot provide optimal fire flow (1,000 gpm) in residential communities. These results have translated into a water main rehabilitation program that involves a 20-year schedule and over 30 miles of water main replacements.

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The WDMP recommended improvement projects, which were prioritized by fire hydrants providing less than optimal fire flows, aging infrastructure and water main breaks. Many of these projects are planned in the Twinbrook neighborhood, where pipes are more than 50 years old. Cast iron water pipes installed in the 1950s have developed flow restrictions, which reduce the amount of available fire flow. The water main rehabilitation program will begin in 2009. Also, the city has initiated a plan to replace all water meters to increase the accuracy of the water meter readings and therefore improve the billing accuracy.

**Sanitary Sewer**

The Twinbrook neighborhood is located in the Rock Creek sewershed. The City completed two Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Studies (SSES) in separate areas of the Rock Creek sewershed, including the Twinbrook neighborhood south of Veirs Mill Road. The SSES found broken pipes, leaking pipe and manhole joints as well as tree root intrusion into the pipes. The Rock Creek sewer rehabilitation program (sewer pipe and manhole lining) began in 2006 and work on the areas identified for rehabilitation from the SSES was completed in 2008. In FY 2009, the City's maintenance division began a sewer preventative maintenance program to inspect all of the sanitary sewers in the city once every 10 years using closed circuit television (CCTV) inspection. From the CCTV inspections, a condition rating is assigned to the pipes and manholes and rehabilitation is planned. The goal of these studies and inspections is to identify pipes and manholes in poor structural condition and find evidence of inflow and infiltration (I&I). Infiltration occurs when high groundwater seeps into the sewer pipes through cracks and holes in the pipeline, pipe connections and manholes. Inflow occurs when stormwater directly enters the sewer system through roof drains (connected to the sewer system), manhole covers, or illicit storm drain connections into the sewer. I&I increases the flow of extraneous water in a wastewater collection system. Minimizing I&I decreases the amount of extraneous flows in the sewer system and thus reduces the City's operating expenses and may avoid capital expenses associated with replacing pipe to increase capacity for future development. Additionally, there are environmental benefits of keeping the groundwater in the ground and decreasing the amount of flow requiring treatment.

Additionally, a sewer capacity study is planned for the entire Rock Creek sewershed to determine the existing sewer capacity. The sewer capacity study will aid the City in planning for sewer system upgrades as well as to assess its current system capacity. The study is planned to begin in FY 2009 and will take approximately one year to complete.

**Stormwater Management**

The majority of the Twinbrook neighborhood lies in the Rock Creek Watershed, with a small portion at Route 28 and Veirs Mill Road lying in the Cabin John Watershed. There are two Montgomery County-owned and managed lakes to the north of Twinbrook: Lake Bernard Frank and Lake Needwood.



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Development in Twinbrook occurred prior to the current adoption of Stormwater management laws, and urban runoff in storm drains is not managed through stormwater treatment facilities. In a new development, ponds or filters are used to clean the runoff before it enters the stream system, but in a development as old as Twinbrook, urban runoff water in storm drains is not treated. Retrofits (adding or upgrading stormwater management for existing development) are an option if enough land is available and the location is suitable. Three stormwater management retrofits of existing public stormwater management ponds were constructed just outside of the Twinbrook neighborhood near and in the Redgate Golf Course. These retrofits were completed to improve the condition of a branch of Rock Creek that runs through the Twinbrook neighborhood near the Glenview Mansion.

The Rock Creek Watershed Management Plan was adopted in April 2000. A new watershed study for Rock Creek is scheduled to begin in 2011, and new recommendations may be made based on current storm water management regulations, compliance with the City of Rockville's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and the use and availability of sufficient land. Stream restoration projects in Rockcrest Park and Alsace Lane were completed in 2007.

The City of Rockville has also initiated educational and outreach programs that focus on stormwater quality. The Twinbrook neighborhood has historically had a higher incidence of complaints of illicit discharge of pollutants (such as motor vehicle oil, house paint, etc.) to the storm drain system than other areas of the City, so a targeted educational campaign would likely prove beneficial. The storm drain marking program affixes colorful "Do Not Pollute!" markers to storm drain inlets to promote proper waste disposal. The markers also have the City of Rockville's Pollution Prevention Hotline number on them (240-314-8348) and residents can report dumping, improper waste manage

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ment that could result in pollution; odors or fish kills in streams. The Adopt-a Stream program will assist community groups with performing cleanups of their adopted section of stream. The City has also partnered with Civic Associations for the implementation of Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater management techniques on residential property (also known as Environmental Site Design, or ESD). These measures include treating stormwater onsite via rain gardens and rain barrels, as well as encouraging downspout disconnection, native plant landscaping and a general reduction of site impervious area. The use of these site-level stormwater management techniques is particularly valuable for an area like Twinbrook, which was developed without traditional regional stormwater controls and now lacks enough space for stormwater retrofits. The City has amended the Stormwater Management ordinance to allow the collection of a stormwater management utility fee from all property owners. The fee will be used

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through the City's Stormwater Management Fund to subsidize capital and operating expenses for stormwater management, storm drainage and water quality protection. As part of these programs, the City may include assistance with LID techniques to improve drainage problems or water quality on private properties. Twinbrook residents and businesses could benefit greatly from such a program.

**Drainage Issues**

Certain areas in Twinbrook are prone to surface drainage or groundwater problems. Most drainage problems and complaints occur in the spring when the rainfall is heavy and the groundwater table is higher. Drainage issues are often more common in older neighborhoods, like Twinbrook. At the time Twinbrook was built, developers covered streams or low-lying areas to build houses. Groundwater seeks its original level and this results in basement flooding, standing water in yards and the need for sump pumps.

The City of Rockville can assist residents with advice about drainage concerns, but the homeowners must address problems on individual lots. In the past, methods to improve the drainage were identified but proved to be too costly for residents, even with cost sharing by the City.

Several home sites in near Norbeck Road and Burdette Road have large rear yards that are not suitable for building because of the natural features of the land. These sites may be good candidates for conservation easements. A conservation easement is a legal agreement that prohibits or limits certain kinds of development on the land while allowing the landowner to continue to own it, to live on it, and to use it with possible tax benefits.

**Burgundy Estates Drainage Problems**

Specific drainage problems have been encountered in the Burgundy Estates area. All the land is privately owned with no Home Owners' Association in place. Residents are responsible for upkeep of their own property. There are no common areas or public drainage easements.

Most of the houses, back yards, patios and many driveways drain towards the back of the properties, so the runoff cannot reach the streets to drain there. The flat yards cause overland flow to spread out horizontally across yards, making the yard wet for a prolonged period of time. Numerous springs and seeps have been present within these lots since the original subdivision in 1956. The natural groundwater table is high in this area as well. All of these factors cause basement sump pumps to run more frequently and cause additional soggy in low spots in the yards.

In the past, the City of Rockville has offered financial assistance to help with the drainage problems at Burgundy Estates, but most residents did not wish to participate in the cost

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shared improvements, so the projects were dropped. Over the years, Public Works staff has responded to complaints of clogged storm drain inlets and removed sediment, debris, or blockages from the private storm drain pipes. In their research, Public Works staff has determined that the original grading and subsurface groundwater conditions in the area are the main cause of the drainage issues.

**Tree Maintenance and Replacement**

The City of Rockville Forestry Department is responsible for approximately 25,000 street trees, park trees, and trees at all facilities. The City tree crew handles hazard abatement, urgent removals, and routine work requests. Contractors perform removals, block pruning and emergency work.

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There is funding for tree removal and replacement that was originally funded in 1998 as the Twinbrook Street Tree Replacement CIP. It was meant to remove and replace trees deemed hazardous, that were a major nuisance or those that were incompatible with utilities. Approximately 4,500 trees were inspected with 1,200 trees identified as possible removals over the next 10 years. An estimated 1,000 trees have been removed and replaced to date. In 2003, the CIP was revised and renamed the Urban Forest Renewal CIP to incorporate problem trees throughout the City of Rockville including disease-prone crabapples, aging cherries and certain diseased oaks. These funds transferred to the City Forestry operating budget in 2008. A major portion of the fund will continue to be spent for removals in Twinbrook.

Removals are prioritized City-wide by degree of hazard. Expenditures are divided between removal and replacement. The current average cost per removal for large diameter trees is over \$1000 per tree, which reduces the number of trees that can be removed each year.

Requests for routine tree maintenance are received via the Tree Maintenance Line (Telephone 240 314 8700). City wide, the forestry division receives over 1,000 requests for service annually. Block pruning is done on a regular basis to elevate, thin and remove dead limbs, and improve lighting. Funding levels were increased in 2008 to conduct block pruning on a 15-year cycle.

Another issue concerning street trees are the problems associated with clay sewer drainage pipes. Many of the original private sewer pipes in Twinbrook were made of clay and failure of these pipes after fifty years is not uncommon. When this occurs, tree roots often penetrate the broken or disintegrating pipes, causing blockages. It is the homeowner's responsibility to replace the pipe with new pipe. Tree roots will seldom penetrate sound pipes unless there is a joint problem. (Please See Appendix for the City's Master Tree Plan)

**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****Critical Issues**

Potomac Electric Power Company (Pepco) has a utility easement to prune any branches that interfere with power lines. They conduct regular pruning, aimed at insuring electrical service to their customers, on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, every 2 to 4 years. For requests concerning tree limbs in electric wires call Pepco at 202 833 7500 and say the word “Agent” when prompted.

Twinbrook Station has a reforestation requirement of 15% of the total land. All of the trees are not required to be on site however. In the approved preliminary development plan for Twinbrook Station, the developers are providing 85% of the required trees (approximately 400 trees) on site. As these trees will be on private property, there will be no tax dollars spent on maintaining them.

Sidewalks are an on-going concern in relation to street trees. A privately owned tree may need to be removed for sidewalk installation. The roots of existing trees can cause damage to sidewalks with their roots. In Twinbrook, most streets have a sidewalk on one or both sides of the road. The streets that do not have sidewalks on either side are to the west of Hillcrest Park and the south of Veirs Mill Road. If the street already has one sidewalk, it may be desirable to wait until the

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trees on the other side are ready to be removed, rather than remove them prematurely to install the other sidewalk. When a sidewalk project is initiated, Traffic and Transportation staff works with the departments of forestry, planning and neighborhood resources to assess potential impacts.

City of Rockville staff also maintains park trees. Such trees are located in both active areas, like Hillcrest Park and passive areas, like the John G. Hayes Forest Preserve. Maintenance of these trees requires staff time and financial resources. Creation of an Open Space Zone may be considered to protect existing parkland and the trees on it, instead of the residential zoning that is the current base zones for parks. (Open space zones are discussed further in Chapter 7 – Community Facilities, Recreation and Parks and Open Space).

**Noise**

The City of Rockville is covered by the Montgomery County Noise Policy. More information can be found by calling 240-777-7770 and asking to speak with an Environmental Protection Specialist, or on-line at:  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/deptmpl.asp?url=/content/dep/Noise/home.asp>

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## Chapter 7: Community Facilities: Recreation, Parks and Open Spaces

### Summary of Recommendations

- Develop and implement a Parks Recreation and Open Space Plan for all City parks facilities.
- Continue to develop and implement protection mechanisms for City-owned parkland and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Provide funding for the Park Land Acquisition Fund.
- Create a system of conservation easements for properties identified as suitable (see Chapter 6 – The Environment).
- Explore the feasibility of expanding the Twinbrook Community Center.
- Determine whether changing use patterns and changing demographics in the neighborhood warrant changes in park amenities.
- Consider leasing commercial or institutional space in order to provide amenities and programs for residents in the Twinbrook area:
  - Expand activities for seniors within the Twinbrook neighborhoods.
  - Expand activities for teens, with free and low cost activities for teenagers, in the Twinbrook neighborhoods.
- Promote the City of Rockville Recreation and Parks Scholarship Program that encourages individual and corporate giving.
- Fully fund the improvements in the Civic Center Long Range Plan to ensure that the property is sustainable and accessible for current and future residents.
- Continue to monitor and review the City's Recreation and Parks Cost-Recovery policy to determine what adjustments might be required to meet the needs of all residents of the Twinbrook community.
- Review the use of the space at the Rockcrest Recreation Center as part of any related CIP project to determine the most appropriate use that meets the community's current and future needs.
- Consider a review of the Montgomery County Twinbrook Library to determine if this heavily utilized facility is meeting the community's needs, and when additional space will be needed.
- Montgomery County should move the social service programs out of the former Broome Middle School.
- Do not locate any additional Montgomery County service centers, such as those at Lone Oak and Broome, in the Twinbrook neighborhoods.

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**Analysis of Issues**

The City provides the majority of the public services and facilities in the neighborhood. Responsibility for services such as education, fire/rescue, and libraries lies with Montgomery County, which is also responsible for a network of human service agencies and programs situated in the study area.

Demographic indicators show that the area is becoming increasingly multi-cultural. This change has an impact on both the kinds of social services that are required, and also on the kinds of recreational activities that appeal to a changing population. Flexible space is required – both indoors and outdoors - that can be programmed to serve the needs of different population groups.

*Page 70 (TNPAG Plan reference)*

The total parkland for the City is approximately 928 acres, including Redgate Golf Course. Using the 2000 census data, the population for the entire City (47,388), which equates to 16.7 acres of parkland per 1000 population. One-quarter of the City's parkland is located in Planning Areas 7 and 8. The two planning areas have approximately 200 acres of public open space: approximately 21 acres in Planning Area 8, south of Veirs Mill Road, and around 180 acres, including the 153 acres Civic Center Park, in Planning Area 7. Ball fields, playing courts, and picnic areas are located throughout the planning areas. In addition, two large cemeteries provide some measure of open space.

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## Planning Area 7 – Parks and Recreation Facilities:

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Broome Athletic Park and Gym 751 Twinbrook Parkway	7.5 acres Park (19.49 acres total)	Montgomery County. Park area leased by City of Rockville.
Calvin Park 1248 Gladstone Drive	5.9 acres	City of Rockville
Civic Center Park 603 Edmonston Drive Climbing Gym Croyden Creek Nature Center F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater Glenview Mansion	153 acres	City of Rockville
Lone Oak Park Grandin Avenue at Woodburn Road	6.53 acres total	Montgomery County
Meadow Hall Elementary School 951 Twinbrook Parkway	8.4 acres	Montgomery County Public Schools
Rockville High School 2100 Baltimore Road	30.3 acres	Montgomery County Public Schools
Silver Rock Park Clagett Drive and Maple Avenue	2.5 acres	City of Rockville
Tweed Park Tweed Street	1.4 acres	City of Rockville

## Planning Area 8 – Parks and Recreation Facilities

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Owner</b>
Hillcrest Park 1150 Crawford Drive	4.4 acres	City of Rockville
Rockcrest Ballet Center and Park 1331 Broadwood Drive	7.4 acres	City of Rockville
Twinbrook Community Recreation Center and Annex 12920 Twinbrook Parkway	9.2 acres	City of Rockville
Twinbrook Elementary School 5911 Ridgeway Avenue	10.15 acres	Montgomery County Public Schools

*Please see Appendices and for additional information on Parks and Recreational facilities in Twinbrook.*

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The 2000 U.S. Census puts the total population of Planning Areas 7 and 8 at 10,847, which equates to 18.2 acres of parkland per 1000 population. This exceeds the national standard of 10 acres per 1000 population as set by the National Recreation & Park Association guidelines. But these statistics can be misleading. In Planning Area 8 alone, the 5,414 residents (2000 U.S. Census) share 21 acres, or approximately 3.8 acres per 1000 population, while in Planning Area 7, with a similar population (5,433 - 2000 U.S. Census) there are more than 33 acres per 1000 population.

The Twinbrook Station development will provide some measure of open space, but not recreational open space, such as ball fields, and there are very few opportunities within the area to create additional open space. The City and the neighborhood associations should investigate possible open spaces of whatever size for pocket parks, especially near the Twinbrook Metro Station.

The City recently adopted a Park Zone as a protection mechanism for City parkland. Alternative means, such as a system of conservation easements or an enhanced open space zone could also add an additional layer of protection to both City parkland and other open space resources.

The Park Land Acquisition Fund in the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) has been assigned "placeholder" status and is not funded. This gives the City little ability to act quickly should suitable open space become available.

**Cost of Services**

The City implemented a system of Recreation and Parks cost recovery in 2004. All City owned facilities are expected to recover a certain portion of their costs, with the exception of places such as City parks. In the Twinbrook area there is a five-year cost recovery target of approximately 75% for Civic Center costs, and 50% for Twinbrook Community and Recreation Center costs. By contrast, the five-year goal for the Lincoln Park Community Center is 20%.

The City's target for overall cost recovery within the Department of Recreation and Parks is 36%. While managing the City's expenditures is a laudable goal, recreation and parks programs serve a social and community purpose, which may not be met if programs are too expensive for citizens in the area. However, reducing cost recovery in Twinbrook would have a fiscal impact on the revenue produced in Recreation and Parks programs.

Of larger communities surveyed, the target range for cost recovery was 25-50%, placing the City's target of 36% within this range. Nonetheless, some community members have expressed concerns about whether prices at the TCRC are beyond the means of some neighbors. The City should periodically evaluate whether continuing at this level is desirable if the social and community needs of all the City's residents are to continue to be met.



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**Youth Services**

The City offers a wide range of activities for children from pre-school childcare to teen activity events. Pre-school and childcare programs should be expanded if space is available and demand is warranted.

In Planning Area 7 the Civic Center complex offers specialized programs and camps at the Nature Center, the Climbing Gym, and the Theatre. These activities are for children from all parts of the City and the surrounding areas. Planning Area 8 features a Summer Playground program that serves approximately 130 children, and The Kidz Club After School program serves approximately 90 children. In addition, approximately 13% of the registrants in the after school program for middle school children in the CHAT Room are from the Twinbrook area. The Twinbrook Community and Recreation Center (TCRC) offers a supervised after school program for children attending Twinbrook and Meadow Hall Elementary Schools and a Literature Class in the summer. Organized programs are offered in the afternoons during the summer for TCRC members.

TCRC is open to adults and teens over 15 years old after 7:00 p.m. (8:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and during the summer). The Rockcrest facility is devoted solely to ballet, leaving teenagers without a “neutral” place to meet with their friends and neighbors. The City’s Recreation and Parks Department has established programs to serve teenagers, and these could be expanded in the Twinbrook area, if additional facility space could be made available.

**Senior Citizen Services**

According to the 2000 U.S. census there are 1,839 people over 60 (809 men and 1,030 women) in the 20851 zip code area. In Twinbrook, 219 seniors are Senior Center members.

Senior services available to Twinbrook residents include free bus transportation to and from the Senior Center; a resident annual discount membership of \$25 for Senior Center membership; active and passive activities at the Twinbrook Community Recreation Center, especially during the day for seniors with a TCRC membership; Twinbrook Park, Civic Center Park; FSF Theatre; and Glenview Mansion. However, based on community input, some members of the community feel that there is a lack of “neutral” unprogrammed enclosed space within the community for senior residents to meet and interact with their neighbors.

**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****City Owned and Managed Facilities****The Civic Center**

The historic Glenview Mansion and the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater are located on the Civic Center site, and provide cultural and recreational amenities for City residents, and others from surrounding communities. In previous years CIP modifications on the Civic Center property focused on enhancements to specific buildings. Now, as programs have increased, the Civic Center property should be considered as a whole, rather than in isolated parts. A Task Force, consisting of representatives of the Recreation and Park Advisory Board, the Cultural

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Arts Commission, The Historic District Commission, The Mansion Docents, as well as City Staff, was set up to create a comprehensive plan to address the Civic Center issues. The City retained John Milner Associates, Inc. and OCULUS to prepare a Long Range Plan for the Glenview Mansion and Grounds. The Plan was completed in July 2002 and has served as a decision-making tool on the future management and use of the property. The Task Force developed a list of issues that needed attention and assisted in the development of the Request for Proposal to hire an engineering consultant.

In April of 2004, the City contracted Apex Engineering to:

- Modify existing parking lots to potentially increase capacity and to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.
- Examine and redesign entrance road for more direct access to main parking lot and regulate traffic flow.
- Examine alterations of existing traffic flow with options of restricting access on main road to Glenview Mansion and creating new two-way traffic in another location.
- Develop better internal pedestrian access to park facilities.
- Design functional drop-off and service areas.
- Develop a phased approach for construction/modifications to each area and present a detailed cost estimate for each.

Apex has worked with City Staff, the Task Force and neighborhood residents to examine the issues. Design options and modifications have been developed that respect historical and significant landscaping issues, storm water management and traffic requirements. Once the Mayor and Council have approved the final designs, the City will address the phasing in of modifications. Funding has been set aside in the CIP starting in 2010 to address ADA issues first, and then modify other areas in subsequent years.

**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****Twinbrook Community and Recreation Center**

The Twinbrook Community and Recreation Center (TCRC) was established in October 1999 to provide a variety of activities for residents and space for community events; offering classes, special events, and fitness opportunities; complimenting the school curriculum for youth; and providing information and registration for City programs. The Center is not open to unsupervised youths of 14 years old and younger after 7:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, after 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday and during school breaks and the summer.

There are approximately 70,000 user visits to the center each year. TCRC operates on a membership basis and is open to City of Rockville residents and non-residents. There are a variety of membership options available. In 2008 there were 1,221 individuals with Annual

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Center Memberships, just under half of whom, 621, are City Residents

- 417 members are 18 years and under
- 655 members are 19 years to 64 years
- 17 members are 64 years and older
- 132 members who are listed as “other”

In 2008 there were 206 individuals with Annual Fitness Memberships, 144 of whom were City residents:

- 2 members are 18 years and under
- 148 members are 19 years to 64 years
- 22 members are 64 and older
- 34 who are listed as “other”

TCRC offers a full range of facilities: a full size gymnasium, computer lab, two multipurpose rooms, fitness center, lobby area, annex building – used as a child care center and for evening meetings, City Police office and an outdoor playground, together with tennis and basketball courts. Issues currently facing the TCRC include: unsupervised children in the Park, the difficulty of motivating and involving teenagers in activities and homework, an increasing number of rentals and activity during the day, damage to the facility, and patrons stealing from other patrons.

Space constraints limit the availability of “neutral space” for residents (of all ages, but youth and seniors particularly) to drop in and meet their neighbors, and this Plan recommends that the City should explore the feasibility of expanding the Twinbrook

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Community Center. In addition, the cost recovery system potentially could lead to an increase in activity fees, further reducing the number of residents who can afford to enjoy them. Further cost-savings might require a reduction in the Center opening hours and staff and additional rentals to private groups. Scholarships are available to low-income residents, and these can meet the needs of residents who wish to participate in a particular program. The City always welcomes donations to the Recreation Fund “People Helping People” and more information on how to make a donation can be found at <http://www.rockvillemd.gov/recreation> or by calling 240-314- 8620.

Events such as Halloween, Valentines and Mother’s Day parties are offered at a low cost and are very well attended. TCRC staff is seeking sponsors for special events to keep costs to a minimum. Telephone 240-314-8830.

**The Rockcrest Ballet Center and Park (Rockcrest Recreation Center)**

The Rockcrest Ballet Center and Park (Rockcrest Recreation Center) is centrally located within the community at 1331 Broadwood Drive. The Park is available to the public at large, but the Center is used solely for ballet lessons and practice. Starting in FY2011, the City plans to renovate and expand the Center in order to make it into a multi-use facility, and provide space for the expansion of the dance facilities. Plans call for adding a multi-purpose room and/or converting the facility to a general Community Center. Both senior citizens and teenagers appear to feel underserved in the Twinbrook neighborhoods and the City may wish to consider whether ballet is the most appropriate use of the facility, or whether it might be put to a use that would serve the needs of the community that surrounds it, rather than the City as a whole.

(Please see Appendix for a listing of Recreation and Parks facilities and programs offered in Twinbrook.)

**Montgomery County Owned and Operated Facilities****Schools:**

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) has established a set of objective criteria and a transparent process to handle the expansion and/or modernization of schools:

~~Page 75 (TNPAG Plan reference)~~

The “over-capacity” trigger is 92 seats, or four classrooms.

- The MCPS Demographer looks at the school grade-by-grade and year-by-year to determine growth patterns.
- A Feasibility Study is scheduled into the 6-year CIP. This study is conducted to determine the needs.

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- Planning and construction money will then be allocated through the CIP.
- The County Council has instructed MCPS not to announce an expansion date until the Feasibility Study is completed and the planning and construction money have been allocated.

There are two elementary schools, one high school and one special needs school within the planning area.

**Twinbrook Elementary**  
**5911 Ridgeway Avenue**  
**Site size 10.15 acres.**  
**Zoned R-60 residential.**

Twinbrook Elementary School was built in 1956, renovated in 1986 and includes a gym, which is also used for community activities. The School's 10.15-acre site offers the option of adding an addition.

- The City uses the school for a wide range of recreational programs for both youth and adults.
- MCPS plans to retain the site as a school for the life of the Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan.

**Meadow Hall Elementary**  
**951 Twinbrook Parkway**  
**Site Area 8.37 acres.**  
**Zoned R-90 residential.**

The City of Rockville's CIP allocated \$200,000 as a contribution towards construction of a "community sized" gym at Meadow Hall. This has funded a larger main court, space for a small bleacher section and other amenities that will allow for a greater level of community use programming.

- The City uses the school field for recreational programs.
- MCPS plans to retain the site as a school for the life of the Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan.

**Rockville High**  
**2100 Baltimore Road**  
**Site area 30.32 acres:**  
**Zoned R-90 residential.**

- The City uses the school field for recreational programs.
- MCPS plans to retain the site as a school for the life of the Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan.

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**Carl Sandburg Learning Center**  
**451 Meadow Hall Drive**  
**Site area 7.6 acres:**  
**Zoned R-60 residential.**

The Carl Sandburg Learning Center is scheduled for modernization. A Feasibility Study has been completed and planning is scheduled for FY 2010.

- The Learning Center provides services for disabled children and does not have gymnasium or classroom space that are suitable for community use.
- MCPS plans to retain the site as a school.

**Community-Level Human Services**  
**Lone Oak Center**  
**1010 Grandin Avenue**

The Lone Oak Center is owned by Montgomery County but offers community support through a number of non-profit groups. Lone Oak Center is well maintained, offers services to the community, and appears to be well run.

*Page 76 (TNPAG Plan reference)*

The adjacent Lone Oak Park is leased by the City of Rockville and is programmed for recreational use.

- MCPS has no plans to return the site to school use.

**Broome Middle School (former)**  
**751 Twinbrook Parkway**  
**Site area 19.49 acres:**  
**Zoned R-90 residential.**

MCPS closed Broome Middle School more than twenty years ago. The site is now owned by Montgomery County, which uses it as office space for the Montgomery County Board of Elections and the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). A number of community services are provided.

- The gymnasium and field are leased to the City of Rockville for recreational use.
- MCPS has no plans to return the site to school use.

(Please see Appendix for a full list of human service programs located in Twinbrook)

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The community has expressed continuing concern over activities at the Broome site and Montgomery County should move the social service programs out of this location, as they are not compatible with a residential community or an adjacent elementary school.

This Plan supports the existing County service center at Lone Oak, but recommends that no additional County service centers be located in the Twinbrook neighborhoods.

**Twinbrook Library:  
202 Meadow Hall Drive**

The Twinbrook Library, one of two County libraries located within the City, is situated at the intersection of Meadow Hall Drive and Veirs Mill Road. It was renovated in 1999 – 2000.

The Library offers books and media as well as a wide range of community activities, from children's story times to workshops and classes for all ages. It is well used and often crowded. This Plan recommends that a review be conducted to determine if it is meeting the community's needs and when additional space will be needed. The Library's location, adjacent to the Twinbrook Shopping Center, means that activity in one area tends to spill over to the other. Library staff echoes the concerns of area business owners about loitering and security. (Please see Chapters 4 and 8 for recommendations about the area.)

**Twinbrook Swimming Pool  
13027 Atlantic Avenue  
Site area 4.62 acres.  
Zoned R-60 residential.**

The Twinbrook Swimming Pool Corporation is a private organization that owns a pool complex on approximately 4.62 acres that are adjacent to Twinbrook Park. It operates as a private swimming pool and members of the community may purchase a membership. This Plan recommends that the base zone remain R-60 and confirms the recommendation made in the City's Comprehensive Master Plan. Confirm City Master Plan recommendation:

"Maintain the R-60 zone for single family housing on the Twinbrook Swimming Pool Corporation site if it is developed or acquire the site for additional park and green space to increase the size of the park." Should the City acquire the property for

~~Page 77 (TNPAG Plan reference)~~

parkland, steps should be taken to permanently protect it as parkland. Consideration should be given to retaining the swimming facilities for public use (funded by the City of Rockville or by the City in partnership with Montgomery County).

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**Churches**

There are eight church sites within the Twinbrook planning areas, all of which lie on residentially zoned land. (See Chapter 2: Land Use, and Chapter 3: Housing.) Several of the church sites cater to more than one congregation. The churches have proved to be “good neighbors” in the past and none of them have presented a problem to the neighborhood in terms of excess traffic. This plan therefore supports the churches continued presence in the area, and recommends that their sites continue in their present use.

**Emergency Services, Fire and Rescue**

The City of Rockville Police provides police response to the two Planning areas. The Rockville Volunteer Fire Department provides fire and rescue services from their Station 23 on Rollins Avenue and Station 3 on Hungerford Drive.

**Crime and Public Safety**

The population of the Twinbrook neighborhood will increase over the coming years with the development of Twinbrook Station and the possible redevelopment of smaller areas such as industrially zoned properties on Lewis Avenue and the Ardennes Avenue/Halpine Road sites. In the short term, additional police patrols must be planned for to keep the community safe and secure. In the long term, as Twinbrook Station builds out, the City should consider establishing a Police substation in the Veirs Mill Road commercial area, as currently there is no substation in the eastern portion of the City. (See Chapter 4.)

The City offers a Mediation Service to help resolve issues at the neighbor-to-neighbor level.



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## Chapter 8: Implementation

**Analysis of Issues**

The Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan seeks to lay out the current conditions within the neighborhood, provide guidance for its continued stability and enhancement, and establish conditions to foster a cohesive community that is able to embrace change, while retaining the unique qualities that have served its residents for the past half century. To meet these goals, the Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group made a series of recommendations that aim to respond to change while respecting the rights of individual property owners in the residential, the commercial and the industrial areas.

But a plan is just that, a plan, until its recommendations are acted upon. A workable series of implementation strategies are an essential component of any well-thought-out plan, and five key areas have been identified during the planning process that can act as catalysts for implementation of the Plan recommendations. Each catalyst is described below, together with supporting initiatives that are intended to promote implementation of the major goal. The five catalysts are:

- ***The Residential Areas:*** Maintain and enhance the residential character of the Twinbrook neighborhoods to ensure continued viability and sustainability.
- ***The Public Realm:*** Maintain, upgrade and acquire publicly owned land to ensure that recreational opportunities, public accessibility and the natural environment enhance the quality of life for all residents.
- ***Transportation and Accessibility:*** Promote safe and easy multi-modal access to mass transit, retail and community facilities.
- ***The Commercial Areas:*** Promote the renewal of the Twinbrook neighborhood commercial areas.
- ***The Industrial Areas:*** Promote the renewal of the Twinbrook neighborhood industrial areas.

These catalysts group together Plan recommendations from the various chapters and should help residents, and the City, to identify projects and programs that can help meet the objectives laid out in each catalyst.

Twinbrook is a maturing neighborhood that was built at a time when the City embraced single-use zoning categories and relied on a set of standards that were applied City-wide. The R-60 zoning category that regulates the Twinbrook neighborhoods allows the same height and setbacks in communities throughout the City; market forces at the time of development influenced the size and style of the housing that was built. The City has recently adopted revisions to the R-60 zone that would reduce a home's allowable height and lot coverage, and these new provisions should be carefully monitored in communities

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such as the Twinbrook neighborhoods to ensure that they do not impose undue burdens on homeowners who wish to expand and improve their homes.

The commercial and industrial areas of the neighborhood are also maturing, although at the present time they remain relatively well maintained, have few vacancies and generally provide an acceptable return on investment to their owners. But the adjacent new developments, such as Twinbrook Station and the Rockville Town Square, are bringing change, and single use neighborhood commercial and industrial areas may not function quite so well within the next ten to fifteen years. Places such as the Veirs Mill commercial area and the Lewis Avenue and Ardennes/Halpine industrial areas also offer the potential

*Page 80 (TNPAG Plan reference)*

for accommodating a portion of the residential growth that is anticipated within the City and the region over the next twenty-five years.

**Tools Available**

The City does not currently have a comprehensive redevelopment policy that identifies areas that might be suitable for revitalization, or outline the incentives available to encourage their redevelopment. The City should not use its power of Eminent Domain to assist in the redevelopment of the commercial and industrial areas in Twinbrook. Therefore, a set of regulatory tools that can act as incentives to private redevelopment will need to be devised and implemented.

**Catalyst Number 1**

***The Residential Areas:*** Maintain and enhance the residential character of the Twinbrook neighborhoods to ensure continued viability and sustainability.

**Summary of Project:**

- Maintain the R-60 single unit residential zoning in the Twinbrook neighborhoods. Monitor implementation of the newly adopted R-60 zone development standards.
- Preclude site assembly in the R-60, RMD-10 and PD-MH zoned areas of the Twinbrook neighborhoods.
- Encourage the creation of Neighborhood Conservation Districts, should individual neighborhoods choose.
- To assist homeowners as they renovate their homes, develop a Pattern Book that illustrates the existing housing types and streetscapes and makes recommendations for compatible additions, accessory uses and infill homes.

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**Who:**

- A group of citizens/residents from the Twinbrook neighborhoods.
- City staff.
- Qualified housing design consultant to assist with the development of a Pattern Book.

**Support Initiatives:**

- Initiate a review of the City of Rockville's Housing Maintenance Codes and practices to ensure that they meet the needs of maturing neighborhoods.

*Page 81 (TNPAG Plan reference)*

- Establish a permanent protection mechanism, such as conservation easements for City-owned open space, to give permanent protection to the Civic Center Park and other public parks and to ensure the continuation of an adequate amount of neighborhood open space. Permanently protect the publicly accessible buildings attached to the public parks.
- Encourage individual homeowners to apply to the City if they wish to have their homes considered for designation as historic sites.
- Expand the City's Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) program to serve a larger number of homeowners.
- Increase promotion of the City of Rockville Low-Income Homeowner Tax Credit.

**Catalyst Number 2**

***The Public Realm:*** Maintain, upgrade and acquire publicly owned land to ensure that recreational opportunities, public accessibility and the natural environment enhance the quality of life for all residents.

- Increase open space and recreational opportunities, closer to new population centers.
- Provide greater access to recreational, social and commercial facilities.

**Summary of Project:**

- Develop and implement a comprehensive Parks and Public Spaces Plan for the Twinbrook neighborhoods to improve and increase the public realm.
  - A systematic review of how the public buildings and facilities in the Twinbrook neighborhoods are used.

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- Complete an inventory identifying and quantifying existing greenspace and potential greenspace opportunities for pocket parks, tot lots and additional buffering.
- Identify funding sources (Project Open Space, Parkland Acquisition Fund, etc.)
- Review impact of Recreation and Parks Cost-Recovery Policy on neighborhood amenities and services.

**Who and What:**

- Twinbrook citizens.
- City staff: Planning, Recreation and Parks, Public Works.

**Support Initiatives:**

- Develop and implement a permanent protection mechanism for City-owned parkland to give permanent protection to the Civic Center Park and other public parks, and to ensure the continuation of an adequate amount of neighborhood open space. Permanently protect the publicly

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- accessible buildings attached to the public parks.
- Provide funding for the Parkland Acquisition Fund.
- Create a system of conservation easements for properties identified as suitable.
- Support retention and expansion of the urban tree canopy.

**Catalyst Number 3**

***Transportation and Accessibility:*** Promote safe and easy multi-modal access to mass transit, retail and community facilities.

- Enhance neighborhood quality by improving both the appearance and the functioning of the streetscape to link the community together.

**Summary of Project:**

- Implement a soft-wheel circulator trolley that runs clockwise and counter-clockwise from Rockville Town Center-Rockville Metro-Veirs Mill Road-Twinbrook Parkway-Twinbrook Station-Twinbrook Metro-Rockville Pike-Rockville Town Center to increase connections between the Twinbrook neighborhoods, the Rockville Town Center, Twinbrook Stations and Rockville Pike.

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- Facilitate pedestrian and bicycle access across Twinbrook Parkway, Veirs Mill Road and the CSX and Metro railroad tracks.
- Develop a comprehensive plan for intra-neighborhood pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Complete the City's sidewalk project to improve neighborhood connectivity.

**Who:**

- Twinbrook citizens.
- City staff
- Montgomery County
- State of Maryland

**Support Initiatives:**

- City and State should initiate a streetscape project to improve the physical appearance of the Veirs Mill Road commercial area by installing additional trees and landscaping elements, while assuring safe access from the neighborhoods to the commercial areas.
- Study feasibility of pedestrian/bicycle connections under Veirs Mill Road, at or near Atlantic Avenue, to link both sides of the neighborhood and to improve connections to Rock Creek Park.
- To reduce the impact of cut-through traffic; study the feasibility of one-way circulation systems throughout the Twinbrook neighborhoods, especially in areas with "short blocks."

**Catalyst Number 4**

***The Commercial Areas:*** Promote the renewal of the Twinbrook neighborhood commercial areas.

Replacement of maturing single-use commercial areas with mixed-use neighborhood centers that would provide additional residential options together with a wide range of goods and services to serve the neighborhood.

**Summary of Project:**

- Confirm the Mixed Use Neighborhood Commercial Zone (MXNC) – with a maximum height of sixty-five feet.
- The text of the MXNC zone should be amended to expand the allowable uses to ensure continued viability of the area.
- If the Shopping Center redevelops, then the extension of Atlantic Avenue through the Shopping Center to McAuliffe Drive should be studied to determine if the

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extension will improve traffic circulation in the surrounding community and if the extension can be designed to be compatible with the proposed redevelopment. In the study particular attention should be paid to traffic calming, pedestrian access and safety by utilizing the existing signalized intersection.”

- Recommended land use: mixed-use neighborhood commercial, with a mix of residential and commercial uses, including retail and office.
- Ground floor retail should include a full-service grocery store and a variety of shops and restaurants to serve the neighborhood.
- Businesses in the area should be encouraged to form a Twinbrook Business Association.
- Conditions to be met in order to redevelop:
  - Site assembly:
    - The Twinbrook Mart condominium should only be redeveloped as a combined property – not as individual units.
  - Connection of Atlantic Avenue
  - Provision of publicly-accessible space
  - Project proposal meets all the conditions of zone
- If the Maryland State Highway Administration decides to proceed with an enhanced transit system, consider area as a transit hub.
- Include study of the feasibility of pedestrian/bicycle connections under Veirs Mill Road to link both sides of the neighborhood, together with extensive streetscape improvements

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**Who:**

- A working group should be formed to help guide redevelopment of the area. For the Veirs Mill Road commercial area this group should include but not be limited to the following: residents from both Twinbrook Planning Areas, property owners and/or their representatives, business owners, REDI and/or Rockville Chamber of Commerce, City staff working with a qualified design consultant. (Include and/or consult with Montgomery County and the State Highway Administration(SHA).)
- REDI should include Twinbrook service and retail centers as part of their mission to strengthen and broaden the economic base of Rockville and work to foster a Twinbrook Business Association.

**Support Initiatives:**

- City should coordinate with SHA to initiate a streetscape project to improve the physical appearance of Veirs Mill Road commercial area by improving pedestrian environment, installing additional trees and enhancing landscaping elements.

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- Increase City presence in the Veirs Mill Road commercial area, particularly with the installation of a City Police Sub-station and a Drop-In Center for area teenagers and senior citizens.
- Recommend that the City formulate a comprehensive Redevelopment Policy with appropriate incentives for the redevelopment of specified areas.
- Review of City's Commercial Code Enforcement policies and practices.
- Implement a City-sponsored facade improvement loan program for neighborhood businesses.
- Implement simultaneous to High Performance Building Ordinance adoption.
- Encourage REDI to work with the Rockville Chamber of Commerce to broaden their membership base and to strengthen their services to retailers in Twinbrook.
- Businesses in the area should be encouraged to form a Twinbrook Business Association.

**Catalyst Number 5**

***The Industrial Areas:*** Promote the renewal of the Twinbrook neighborhood industrial areas.

- Improve transitional area between Metro/Twinbrook Station and the Twinbrook neighborhoods. Retain uses that serve community while expanding allowable uses to enable owners to maximize on their location.
- The area should remain within Planning Area 8.
- No automobile uses should be allowed.
- No adult oriented establishments should be allowed.
- Businesses in the area should be encouraged to form a Twinbrook Business Association.

**Summary of Project:**

**For the properties on Lewis Avenue:**

- Confirm the Industrial Light (I-L) zone.
  - Mix of uses may be vertical or horizontal, depending upon site design.
  - Residential units should be located on upper floors and facing on to Lewis Avenue.
  - Live-work units should be encouraged.
  - Commercial retail uses should be very limited.

**For the properties at Twinbrook Parkway/Ardennes Avenue:**

- Confirm the Mixed Use Employment (MXE) zone for the Uniwest/Meljay site at the intersection of Twinbrook Parkway and Ardennes Avenue.

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- Confirm the Mixed Use Business (MXB) zone for 12750 and 12720 Twinbrook Parkway.
- 12720 Twinbrook Parkway is recommended for all multi-family residential use that will create a horizontal mix of uses in the Twinbrook Parkway/Ardennes Avenue/Halpine Road area.
- Recommend the City-owned buffer located between 12720 Twinbrook Parkway and Halpine Road be improved by the owner of 12720 Twinbrook Parkway in accordance with City of Rockville specifications. The owner should work with the City to maintain the buffer in future years.
- Should the properties at 12710 and 12730 Twinbrook Parkway annex into the City they should be rezoned Mixed Use Business (MXB)

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- Site assembly:
  - The Lewis Avenue Condominium should only redevelop as a combined property – not as individual covenant units.

**Who:**

- **Twinbrook residents**
- Property owners and/or their representatives
- REDI
- City staff

**Support Initiatives:**

- Review of City's Commercial Code Enforcement policies and practices.
- Recommend that the City formulate a comprehensive Redevelopment Policy with appropriate incentives for the redevelopment of specified areas.
- Implement a City-sponsored facade improvement loan program for neighborhood businesses.
- Implement simultaneous to High Performance Building Ordinance adoption.
- Improve open and green space elements in the area. (e.g. 5946 Halpine Road and improved maintenance for the treed buffer area at Halpine Road.)
- Request REDI to include Twinbrook businesses as part of their mission to strengthen and broaden the economic base of Rockville.
- Encourage REDI to work with the Rockville Chamber of Commerce to broaden their membership base and to strengthen their services to Twinbrook businesses.

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**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****City-wide Issues that Affect the Implementation of this Plan**

- Develop a City redevelopment policy.
- Develop City policy on industrial land.
- Develop City policy on retail properties.
- Review the City's Housing Policy to de

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- termine whether the current MPDU program is meeting current and future housing needs.
- Review policy on citywide retail sector, with focus on retail centers that abut residential neighborhoods.
  - Develop City policy regarding residential uses abutting major highways.
  - Establish design standards within Rockville Pike and Twinbrook Metro Performance Zone Plans to mitigate reflective noise from buildings abutting railroad tracks.
  - Review impact of Recreation and Parks Cost-Recovery Policy on neighborhood amenities and services.
  - Fund Park Land Acquisition Fund within City's Capital Improvements Program.
  - Encourage review of impact of Community Policing Policy.
  - Ensure adequate Inspection Services staffing levels.
  - Strengthen City's residential property maintenance codes.
  - Request REDI to include citywide or neighborhood service and retail centers as part of their mission to strengthen and broaden the economic base of Rockville.
  - Encourage REDI to work with the Rockville Chamber of Commerce to broaden their membership base and to strengthen their services to retailers in all parts of the City.
  - Develop a City-sponsored facade improvement loan program for neighborhood businesses.

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**Appendix 1 – Twinbrook History**

City staff uncovered a great deal of information about the very early days of Twinbrook as they were researching the area. It has been included in a more comprehensive History of Twinbrook, which traces the evolution of the area from the first land grants right through to the twentieth century, and is available online at:  
<http://www.rockvillemd.gov/masterplan/twinbrook/>

**Twinbrook History**

**Influences on Post World War II Suburbia**

The bulk of Twinbrook's housing inventory and other development dates to the transformative period that followed World War II. The United States had recovered from the Great Depression and the War to become an economic and military superpower. Birth rates exploded. Population growth, suburban expansion, changes to urban planning policies, increased automobile ownership and use, and experimentation with mass production techniques and architecture were occurring outside the edges of urban areas throughout the U.S. after World War II. The automobile became widely prevalent and residential development patterns changed to reflect that.

Examples of neighborhoods similar to Twinbrook can be found all over the U.S. Post-war trends, along with the strong influence of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) regulations, resulted in similar low density patterns of development and homogenous housing products across the U.S. The FHA had substantial impact on street design, lot sizes, site plans and community amenities of post war subdivisions.

**Federal Housing Administration**

Home purchasing was largely limited to those who could afford to buy a house with cash in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. By the 1920s, home buyers often were able to secure short-term loans which had a balloon payment after 3 to 5 years. However, this system proved disastrous to many during the economic crises of the late 1920s and 1930s. The National Housing Act of 1934 established The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to restructure the collapsed home financing system. Its federal home loan insurance program set the stage for the emergence of large-scale residential developers before and after World War II. With it came a set of standards for housing construction and subdivision design.

Between 1924 and 1940, the FHA published a series of bulletins that set standards for subdivision location, transportation access, infrastructure, compliance with local zoning and subdivision regulations, and deed restrictions.<sup>1</sup> Presented as advisory, these bulletins

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<sup>1</sup> Rockville's first zoning ordinance was adopted in 1932 and regulated height, bulk and location of buildings on lots.

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had an aura of authority by those who sought government financing. The publications also made subdivision design recommendations such as creating long blocks to eliminate unnecessary streets, eliminating sharp corners and dangerous four-way intersections, providing parks, playgrounds and other community amenities, and incorporating existing topography and natural features in subdivision layout. Curvilinear streets were recommended as early as the 1930s by the FHA because they offered more privacy and visual interest and adapted better to the topography. The goal was to stabilize real estate values and provide safe, liveable neighborhoods that would justify mortgage lending and FHA mortgage insurance. The FHA encouraged economies of scale facilitated by large-scale operations where a single developer arranged for land purchase, subdivision plat design, and the design and construction of houses and who would lay out entire neighborhoods according to FHA principles.

FHA's *Planning Small Houses* (1936) and *Planning Small Homes* (1940) introduced house designs based on the principles of expandability, affordability and standardization. The floor plans removed non-essential spaces like hallways, traditional ornamentation, and other features that would add to cost. The simplest FHA house became known in the home building industry as the FHA Minimum House. It was 534 square feet with no basement. It had two bedrooms and one bathroom in the rear and a small kitchen and living area in the front. Larger variations of the minimum house were available as well and evolved into the Cape Cod and Ranch styles. FHA also provided instructions for arranging the houses in cul-de-sacs and along streetscapes by varying exterior design and materials and siting to avoid repetition and monotony.

Many of the FHA standards and recommendations became the basis for post-WWII subdivisions like Twinbrook. The *FHA Underwriting Manual* and its related publications greatly influenced the character of the new suburban neighborhoods. Post -World War II housing development, nationally and locally, was characterized by several common elements, including:

*Socio-economic and racial homogeneity:* Mortgage insurance was readily available only in areas where the housing stock and demographics met the FHA's narrowly-defined standards. Middle-income white families occupied the majority of new suburban residential communities.

*Easy availability and affordability:* Government financing, low interest rates, and cost effectiveness made it possible for many to buy a new single-family home for the first time. It was often cheaper to buy a new house in the suburbs than to rent in the city.

*Mass production techniques:* The novel strategies and technology developed during the war were employed in creating new suburban neighborhoods. Construction processes were swift and relied on standardized components and dimensions. This helped to provide a rapid response to the post-war demand for affordable housing.

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*Outlying locations:* Large areas of vacant or rural land were necessary for the mass production needed to address the huge demand for housing. In-fill locations in cities could not accommodate these new techniques.

*Curvilinear street design* could conform to the natural terrain of a site and allow homes to take advantage of hills, creeks, ravines, etc. Curving street patterns gave the impression of country living, affluence, and other desirable qualities while reducing traffic flow and speed within the neighborhood.

*Low density:* The emphasis was on detached single-family homes with surrounding yards.

*Architectural similarity:* The tract house offered a limited number of models to keep costs low. Variations in window fenestration, orientation, siding color, and roof form kept the houses from looking identical.

*Expansion potential and flexibility* were built in so houses were initially affordable but could be enlarged as needed and as accommodated by increases in income. An unfinished second story was common.

*Renewed interest in Modernist ideas:* The post-war housing shortage was so great that the market was willing to accept greater variety and new design concepts, though these were modified for mass consumption and conservative FHA guidelines. Modernism emphasized simplicity, function and utility, the use of modern materials and technology, open floor plans, window walls uniting inside with outside, and a more horizontal orientation. Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian homes, the term he coined in reference to his simple and affordable but comfortable and technologically advanced homes, inspired many post-war homes around the country.

*Relationship of indoors with outdoors:* This concept represented the movement from urban to suburban orientation. Architects sought to bring the outdoors in at this time just as landscape architects tried to incorporate natural topography in the subdivision. Early on, the grass often came right up to the house; the addition of patios later expanded this relationship between indoors and out. Window walls linked the indoors with the outdoors, allowed in natural light, and made the backyard an extension of the house.

*Growing informality:* The front porch gave way to the back yard patio. Casual BBQs and TV dinners replaced formal dining.

*Built-ins:* New homeowners wanted "built-ins" for the community (schools, shopping centers, parks) as well as built-in appliances and accessories for their individual homes.

**Mayor and Council Recommended Draft – April 2009****Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian Concepts**

Many of these design elements can be traced back to Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural design philosophy, coined "Usonia" around 1900. The concept evolved over the next several decades, coming to fruition in the 1930s. Wright's Usonian ideas were a way to address the huge need for affordable middle-class housing with the onset of the Great Depression. The result was a style of architecture he termed "Usonian" which were smaller and simpler than his sprawling Prairie style dwellings for which he was known. The houses had built-in components but little ornamentation. Wright integrated the houses with the landscape and nature and incorporated large windows that brought the outside in. Natural materials blended the house with the site. Common elements of the Usonian architectural style include dominant horizontal lines, flat roofs with large overhangs, open living areas, concrete slab floors with integral heating, built-in components, central hearths, and interior walls that extend to the outside. The concept also extended to Wright's increased focus on community planning and including commercial, educational, cultural and recreational facilities in residential neighborhoods.

**Oak Ridge, Tennessee**

A model for many post-war housing communities was the utopian project that was developed as the Oak Ridge community in Tennessee by the architectural firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Oak Ridge was chosen in 1942 as a site for producing enriched uranium for the first atomic bombs as part of the Manhattan Project. The federal government contracted the firm to lay out the town and design houses, apartments and dormitories for the workers and their families. The homes were prefabricated, many made from Cembesto, bonded cement and asbestos panels, that could be used for both interior and exterior walls, depending on the finish used. The population of Oak Ridge increased from about 3,000 in 1942 to 75,000 by 1945, a feat that was possible because of the new construction technology available.<sup>2</sup> Today the City of Oak Ridge provides original house plans along with permit-ready construction drawings for rehabilitation for free to homeowners to encourage investment in the aging housing stock and help make rehabilitation affordable.<sup>3</sup>

**Levitts and Levittown**

At about the same time, builder Abraham Levitt and his sons, William and Alfred, won a Navy contract to build a large number of defense housing units in Norfolk, VA. During the prior decade, the Levitts' business concentrated on custom building a few hundred homes per year, mostly on Long Island. The Navy contract was their first venture in high

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<sup>2</sup> [www.oakridgevisitor.com/history](http://www.oakridgevisitor.com/history)

<sup>3</sup> [www.cortn.org/comder-html/pressureleases/housingdesignprogram.htm](http://www.cortn.org/comder-html/pressureleases/housingdesignprogram.htm)

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volume, low-cost housing construction and was encouraged by Title IV of the National Housing Act, which promoted home building for defense workers.

The Levitts' more noted project was their post-war planned suburban housing development in Levittown, Long Island, NY (originally called "Island Trees") built during the late 1940s. The fabrication was done in reverse assembly line manner, with specialized tasks being completed by groups who moved from one house to the next. This construction methodology allowed the Levitts to keep production high and costs low and they were able to complete as many as thirty houses per day. The early houses cost less than \$8,000.

The first houses in Levittown, NY were built in 1947, for rental only, and were called Cape Cods. In 1949, the Ranch style was added to the Levittown inventory. The Ranch model was for sale only and had a more modern appearance, with "California" features such as a split roof. In 1950, the Levitts developed four new Ranch models that retained many of the original features but also included carports and televisions built into the staircase. In total, Levitt & Sons built 17,447 houses in the Long Island development between 1947 and 1951. It was the largest housing development ever constructed by a single builder up until that time and priced within the reach of the middle-class. Similar communities were built in Lower Bucks County, Pennsylvania (1951-1958) and in Willingboro, New Jersey (1958-1964). These homes were the inspiration for many new subdivisions in the U.S. and the styles are very similar to houses found in Twinbrook.

**Twinbrook**

"For into the houses were to come an unusually civic-minded homemaker with pride of possession and ingenuity unequalled"<sup>4</sup>

*Insert photo, p. 124 from Eileen McGuckian's book View from Twinbrook Elementary School, 1956. Need to get from Peerless and give credit.*

Relatively few homes were built in the United States during the 1941-1945 World War II years. By 1946, demand for housing was far greater than supply (by about 5 million nationally) and the problem was exacerbated by millions of returning servicemen who were ready to settle down and start families. The federal government responded to this national housing shortage with the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (also known as the GI Bill) which created a Veteran's Administration's mortgage aid program similar to that of the FHA, established a decade earlier. Equipped with a VA loan, returning veterans could easily purchase homes.

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<sup>4</sup> Quote from Gladys L. Cross, "This is Twinbrook", Twinbrook Life, August 19, 1954. Article originally printed in Montgomery County Sentinel

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Rockville accounted for the fastest population growth in Montgomery County in the late 1940s and 1950s. The town's population increased from 2,047 in 1940 to 6,934 in 1950 and to 26,090 in 1960. Between 1950 and 1960, Rockville grew by 276%, while the County's population grew by 107%. County population growth was due mostly to immigration to serve the rapidly expanding federal government, which employed half of the metropolitan area work force in the 1950s.<sup>5</sup> Rockville's growth was also due to its massive annexation of land from 1944 through 1959.

Like much of the large tract housing development that occurred after World War II, residential development in Rockville's Planning Areas 7 & 8 helped to relieve the housing shortage created by this rapid population growth and provide starter homes for returning GIs and their young families.

***Rockcrest***

Rockcrest was built in the 1940s and early 1950s by Thomas O. DeBeck, President of Rockcrest Realty Corporation, using FHA financing. Mr. DeBeck filed three subdivision plats in 1940 for seven blocks of Rockcrest, located south of First Street. The development reflected the traditional Cape Cod style, with seven design variations, and were similar to the earliest Levittown model. Most Rockcrest homes were built on 6,000 square foot lots. The Cape Cod offered the nostalgic comfort and conformity sought by families immediately after the war. The houses had four rooms and a bath and an unfinished attic but no basement. Accessory spaces like dining rooms, pantries, garages and front porches associated with the upper-middle class were sacrificed in this and many other post war developments in favor of providing the essential elements required by modern suburban living at an affordable cost. The first Rockcrest homes were advertised for \$4,125 to \$4,575 in Washington Post ads in 1940. Although Rockcrest was started before the war, and Twinbrook was started shortly after the end of the war, the majority of housing in Planning Areas 7 and 8 was built in the 1950s.

***Twinbrook***

Twinbrook was part of the post-war housing boom and the county welcomed the affordability of the new homes. At the time, the housing market in Montgomery County was dominated by single-family detached homes selling in the \$15,000 to \$20,000 range, out of reach of most young families.

On October 18, 1946, Joseph L. Geeraert, Roland E. Simmons, Wesley J. Sauter and Donald E. Gingery purchased 202 acres of farmland from Lillian Small for \$94,000. The land was bounded by First Street on the west, Veirs Mill Road on the north, Halpine

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Dept of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

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Road and Twinbrook Parkway on the east and the B&O Railroad tracks to the southwest. Together, the four men incorporated “Twin-Brook”, reportedly named for the two streams that bisected the area.<sup>6</sup> With this transaction, the first neighborhoods that we call Twinbrook were conceived, contributing to the emerging nationwide trend of post-World war II suburban tract housing. This area now contains subdivisions Twinbrook, Rockcrest, Warren’s second Addition to Rockcrest, Rockland, Spring Lake Village, Halpine Village and Halpine. Part of the area north of Veirs Mill Road, known as Twinbrook Forest, was later included in Geeraert’s plans.

*Insert photo of developers or Geeraert from Peerless or from Geeraert’s daughter Dede Patterson*

Twin-Brook was one of the first developments in the Washington metropolitan area authorized by the 1946 Emergency Housing Act.<sup>7</sup> Section I included Okinawa Avenue, St. Lo Avenue and portions of Ardennes and Coral Sea Avenues, reminiscent of the war that had just ended. It was originally platted in December 1946 with 20,000 square foot lots (some slightly larger) and was based on subdivision without sewer or water systems.<sup>8</sup> The large lots were required for septic fields. Sewer became available and the town agreed to annex the development, however, so lot sizes were reduced to between 7,000 and 15,000 square feet. Section I was replatted with smaller and more irregularly shaped lots, allowing a larger number of houses, on January 28, 1947.<sup>9</sup>

*Graphic – insert both plats*

The earliest sections of the Twinbrook community were developed before they were annexed into the City of Rockville in 1949. The 2,210-acre annexation was the second largest ever attempted by the town. It also included Broadwood Manor, Lincoln Park, Haiti, Hungerford Towne, and other land to the north and west of the town.

The tract was selected because it was large enough to build single-family detached housing on a large scale and construct a sewer plant, according to Donald Gingery.<sup>10</sup> The site layout was very different from the rectangular grid street and block pattern that is illustrated in the 1803 Plan of Rockville. Rockville’s early planned subdivisions of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, such as the West End and Rockville Heights, modified the traditional grid pattern with circles and radiating streets. Even with a modification of the grid system, these subdivisions maintained connectivity. Houses were built individually for a

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<sup>6</sup> Twin-Brook eventually lost its hyphen and became one word.

<sup>7</sup> Twinbrook: The History, a paper by Barbara Kalabinski, Goucher College Historic Preservation Program, 1998

<sup>8</sup> Montgomery County Land Records, liber 30, folio 1875

<sup>9</sup> Montgomery County Land Records, liber 32, folio 2026

<sup>10</sup> “This is Twinbrook”, by Gladys L. Cross, printed in Twinbrook Life, January 27, 1955, p.9



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particular owner or as speculation and, therefore, often differed in architectural style and size within a single block.

Twinbrook represented a change from these earlier models in terms of block and lot configuration, construction techniques, and appearance of the dwelling units produced. Twinbrook developers abandoned the rectangular grid pattern. Rather, its blocks are irregularly shaped and generally respect the local topography by following the contours of the land and streams. Most streets do not connect directly to the cross-county arterials, Veirs Mill Road and Rockville Pike. The local service streets that run parallel to Veirs Mill Road and the internally-focused street system further, and deliberately, insulate the neighborhood from through traffic. This street pattern was innovative and, though criticized by some at the time (including the City's Planning Advisory Commission), became a widely used defensive method for neighborhood preservation and traffic calming.<sup>11</sup> Today, the winding roads of Twinbrook are a defining character element of the community.

As with Levittown, the Twinbrook developers' goal was to address the huge demand for affordable suburban single-family housing following World War II. The first houses sold for \$9,250 to \$11,500 with a \$50 down payment. Twinbrook introduced Rockville to the "tract" streetscape on a large scale and houses were limited to a few general styles<sup>12</sup>. They were compact and rectangular, one and one-half story frame structures with no basements and unfinished attics that could provide additional space for the owners as family size and incomes increased. Initially, three models were available; a traditional Cape Cod and two versions of a more contemporary style with either a front or side-gable roof.<sup>13</sup> The latter models were asymmetrical with an irregular fenestration, side entry, and minimal detailing. Site orientation, colors, textures and materials were varied to further differentiate the mass-produced houses. Like Levittown, the houses were constructed rapidly and employed the cost-saving techniques inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's Usonian modular houses of the 1930s that was put into wide practice by William Levitt and evolved after World War II. Unlike Levittown, the structural elements of the Twinbrook houses were not pre-fabricated.

The first residents moved into Twin-Brook in late 1948. The houses were annexed to the City shortly thereafter. More than 300 houses were built by 1952 when Twinbrook Elementary School opened with eight rooms. Twelve more classrooms were added a year later, more than doubling student capacity to 550. The Board of Education opened four elementary schools on the east side of Rockville between 1950 and 1956 in the attempt to keep up with the baby boomers.

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<sup>11</sup> Memorandum from Rockville Planning Director to Mayor and Council, March 26, 1956 cited in MHT:26/25, states that "the subdivision as presented would be unacceptable" as it had "an excessive number of streets resulting in a confused traffic circulation"

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix x for Twinbrook house styles

<sup>13</sup> Twinbrook Section I Survey District, Maryland Historical Trust form 26:25

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Twin-Brook was conceived as a complete community with family-oriented amenities. Schools, churches, shopping centers and recreational facilities were built into the concept. Twin-Brook Mart started with a grocery store, drug store, other retail establishments and post office branch on the south side of Veirs Mill Road in 1956. The Twinbrook Library moved to its location in the shopping center in 1959 in the basement of the People's Drug Store. Another shopping center was built on the north side in 1958 and was originally called "Gateway to Rockville", capitalizing on the rapidly increasing prominence of the east side of town. Its opening celebration was attended by local residents, government officials and even future United States vice president, Hubert Humphrey. A new Twinbrook Library, designed by the architectural firm of Keyes, Lethbridge & Condon, opened on land adjacent to this shopping center in 1976.

The young families who moved to Twinbrook had much in common and were exceptionally civic-minded. They quickly formed new clubs, organized community events, and, in the fall of 1949, created the Twinbrook Citizens' Association (TCA). The TCA published a directory of residents and a newsletter and helped create a distinct sense of community.

Twinbrook residents expected the services and recreation programs in their new community that many of them had enjoyed in the more urban environments they had left behind. In addition, the phenomenon of a homogeneous population being created almost instantly, with many common needs and in a novel situation of home ownership for the first time, seems to have increased the intensity of community cohesiveness. The escalated demand for services by the rapidly growing population, created mostly by the new subdivisions emerging on the east side, caught Rockville unprepared. The "instant community" existed in a political vacuum, surrounded by the older Rockville community that was not prepared to include them. The Mayor and Council encountered increasing pressure to resolve a variety of infrastructure problems, especially traffic, parking, water and sewer issues. Rockville's informal style of small-town government, comprised of volunteer businessmen who were generally untrained in public administration, proved inadequate in dealing with the problems of a growing community.

In response, a group of Twinbrook neighbors organized Citizens for Good Government (CGG), a non-partisan political group. Dissatisfied with government response to urgent municipal issues, they focused on dealing with problems such as the lack of street lights and recreation programs and the piecemeal water and sewer system. Citizens for Good Government selected a winning slate to run for Mayor and Council in 1954, with Twinbrook resident, Dickran Hovsepian elected as mayor. The platform emphasized open, progressive government, formulation of the City's first master plan to guide orderly development, added park and recreational facilities, promises to improve transportation and parking, more efficient city operations and a review of financial practices. These issues had been identified by a University of Maryland study in 1950 but had not been implemented.

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Dickran Hovsepian served as Mayor from 1954-1958. His wife, Viola, was the first woman Mayor of Rockville (1984-85) after serving three terms as a City Council member. The Hovsepians, like many of their new neighbors, moved to Twinbrook after renting in D.C. He was a government worker, and initially the couple thought Rockville was too distant for commuting, but they saw an ad for the new houses at an attractive price and low down payment. Their first house was a ranch style on the corner of Ardennes and Veirs Mill Road which they purchased in 1950. They moved to a split-level house on Tweed Court in Twinbrook in 1959.

Rockville was named an All-America City in 1954 by the National Municipal League and Look Magazine, an honor that was awarded annually to only a handful of municipalities. Two hundred-fifty cities competed for the award in 1954 and were judged on the quality and scope of the actions taken by its citizens for the betterment of the community. Rockville earned the award based on its energetic and purposeful citizen effort<sup>14</sup>. Twinbrook residents played a major role in this effort; their participation brought inadequacies to light and identified solutions.

The Twinbrook houses fulfilled the demand for affordable suburban single-family housing following World War II. The modern construction methods, some developed during the war effort and emulated throughout the country as most often illustrated by Levittown, produced a great volume of houses in a reduced time frame and differed significantly from the development pattern of one house at a time on a rigid block pattern that was typical prior to the war.

After completion of the original subdivision, the developers continued construction to the north and west. Twin-Brook, Inc. was dissolved in 1950 and the interests of Sauter and Simmons were sold to Geeraert and Gingery. The latter continued to buy land and build in the area. Development of Geeraert's Addition to Broadwood Manor north of Veirs Mill Road was started in 1951 and Twinbrook Forest followed in 1952 on the Meadow Hall property. Here Geeraert added split levels, small colonials and ranch style houses. Halpine Village was built 1955-56. Twinbrook Forest condominiums was built around the old Meadow Hall mansion in 1964 after the mansion was razed.

Joseph Geeraert was responsible for the design and construction of almost 3,000 houses in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. He was a pioneer of mass-produced suburban housing and was a founder of the Suburban Maryland Building Association and a Director of the National Association of Home Builders. His partner, Donald Gingery, who was involved in the later development of Hungerford Towne and Twinbrook Forest with Geeraert, was a commissioner with Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission from 1949-1965.

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<sup>14</sup> Twinbrook Life, "Rockville Wins", 1954

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Twinbrook is a collection of contiguous subdivisions, many built by the original Twinbrook developers, some by others. It represents broad national trends in subdivision design such as the internalized street network, discouragement of through traffic, and integrated community facilities. It is representative of post-war tract housing, featuring a limited number of house models, built quickly and with goal of supplying small, affordable and expandable homes for young families. These families, starting out in much the same circumstances, quickly dominated the new suburban community spirit.

Today, post-war suburban housing across the country shows the changes that come with time. Some of these mid-20<sup>th</sup> century houses have been torn down, dramatically altered or liberally expanded to accommodate changing tastes, expanding families, and shifting property values. At the very least, exterior cladding and windows have been replaced with more modern materials in many houses. Neighborhoods that started out demographically homogeneous are now widely heterogeneous. Twinbrook Planning Areas 7 & 8 are no exception to the common changes that have affected post-war suburbs throughout the country.

The magnitude of residential development that occurred during the decades that followed the war was unprecedented, fueled by repressed demand, mass production and construction technology advances and the support of the federal government by providing guaranteed financing. Because so many were built, large numbers of these resources still exist; yet increasing numbers of them have been torn down or altered beyond recognition in recent years. Nationally, there has been little attention paid to post-war buildings as historic resources until recently.

In the past, historic preservation concentrated on the age of a resource, and on what was rare, unique or distinctive or represented a high-style aesthetic, quality materials or craftsmanship. Post-war resources are more difficult to judge because of their volume and the fact that post-war suburban residential developments, like Twinbrook, are characterized by their uniformity. Houses were built with the expectation that they would be expanded and altered as families and incomes grew. Many social, historic themes are illustrated by post-war, automobile-oriented, suburban tract housing, but evaluating them as individual resources, especially when their architectural integrity was not usually highly valued even when they were built, makes the task of evaluating them for historic significance even more difficult.

**Historic Preservation in Rockville****Designated Properties***Local Designation:*

Any building that meets one or more of the City's criteria for architectural, cultural, historical or archaeological significance is potentially eligible for historic designation. At

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this time, Twinbrook Planning Areas 7 and 8 contain only one locally designated historic district, Rockville Cemetery.

Properties must meet certain criteria to be eligible for historic designation (see [www.rockvillemd.gov/history](http://www.rockvillemd.gov/history) for more information). Historic districts may be a single site or may contain multiple contiguous sites. Potentially eligible properties are reviewed by Historic District Commission (HDC) staff and may be evaluated and recommended for designation by the HDC to the Mayor and Council. This review is initiated if a demolition application for a potentially eligible property is submitted to the City. A site also may be nominated for designation by the owner or another party.

Exterior alterations to designated properties are reviewed by the HDC to insure that they are appropriate and compatible with the historic district. Ordinary maintenance, such as painting or repairs using the same materials and design, are not reviewed by the HDC; nor is any interior work. County and state tax credits are available to owners of designated properties to offset the costs of eligible rehabilitation work. Federal tax credits are also available to owners of designated income-producing property.

*National Register of Historic Places:*

Unlike locally designated properties, alterations to properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places are not reviewed unless state or federal funding or permitting are involved in a project that may adversely affect the listed property. Some properties in Rockville are both locally designated and listed on the National Register; a few are only on the National Register and not locally designated. Only one property in Planning Areas 7 and 8 is currently on the National Register. The City-owned Glenview Mansion and Civic Center was listed in 2007. National Register properties are also eligible for some tax credits.

For sections of Twinbrook to be considered for National Register district status, the area must retain integrity as a whole, meaning a significant majority of the components that make up the district's historic character must possess integrity. A property that has lost some historic materials or details can be eligible if it retains the majority of the features that illustrate its style in terms of the massing, spatial relationships, proportion, fenestration, texture of materials, and ornamentation. A property is not eligible, however, if it retains some basic features conveying massing but has lost the majority of the features that once characterized its style. If the historic exterior building material is covered by non-historic material (such as modern siding), the property may still be eligible if its significant form, features and detailing are not obscured. In addition, the relationships among the district's components must be substantially unchanged since the period of significance.

Twinbrook would need to be surveyed to determine if portions of it are eligible for the National Register. The City has developed typologies for the majority of houses in Twinbrook (Appendix x). For each type, the critical massing, spatial relationships,

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proportion, pattern of windows and doors, texture of materials and ornamentation needed to convey the historic building type would need to be determined. Survey information on each house must compare the threshold for each style against the existing condition of each house that represents the style. This information could be used to determine if a property has sufficient historic integrity or not. Because the Twinbrook area is so large, this process would be time-consuming. A sampling technique methodology could be developed that could predict the overall level of integrity of the potential district. Any successful nomination would require strong community support.

**Planning Areas 7 and 8: Locally Designated**

Rockville Cemetery (designated in 2002), located east of Avery Road at Baltimore Road, has been an active burial site since 1738. The property has been owned and managed by the Rockville Cemetery Association since 1880. The original two-acre site retains its 19<sup>th</sup> century character even though the grounds have been enlarged and modernized over time. The cemetery is also significant as a modern landscape.

**Planning Areas 7 and 8: National Register of Historic Places**

Glenview/Civic Center (listed on the National Register in 2007), located between Baltimore Road (MD Rt. 28) and Avery Road, includes the 1926 Neo-classical Revival house that envelopes an 1838 structure, a “dollhouse” cottage, and 65 acres of landscaped grounds. Non-contributing elements include the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, tennis courts, nature center, three maintenance facility buildings and parking areas. The farm once included 508 acres.

**Potential Historic Resources**

Other properties throughout the City are *potentially* eligible for historic designation, meaning that they would be further evaluated for architectural, historic, cultural or archeological significance if they became the subject of a demolition application. This process allows architectural and genealogical documentation to be completed and ensures that significant properties are not lost to demolition or neglect. In addition, owners of these properties may choose to nominate them for designation so that they may enjoy the many benefits of owning a designated property, including tax credits for eligible rehabilitation work. It is City policy to encourage property owners to nominate their houses rather than have the City initiate historic designation for a potentially significant property unless it is threatened with demolition.